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ABSTRACT

This report examines specific elements of the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) of the Center for Civic Education, providing data from an assessment of the first-year SVPDP implementation process. Chapter 1 examines the state of violence prevention and civic education in American schools. Chapter 2 outlines the 1999-00 SVPDP research strategy and design, the program's first-year implementation plan, and the challenges of balancing the SVPDP's implementation and research objectives. Chapter 3 profiles the seven first-year SVPDP pilot districts, highlighting characteristics shaping the program's implementation in each district. Chapters 4-8 assess the seven pilot sites' first year implementation, identifying the influence of several classroom, school, school district, and community factors: SVPDP site coordinators and site evaluators; SVPDP teachers and teacher training workshops; SVPDP curricular materials and culminating activities; the physical, instructional, and policy environments of the SVPDP classrooms and schools; and SVPDP-related school district, parent, and community factors. Chapter 9 concludes by affirming the importance of curriculum-based civic education programs such as the SVPDP, recommending key action steps to support the sound, long-term use of civic education curricular materials for school violence prevention. Five appendixes contain questionnaires and curriculum outlines. (SM)

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PREVENTION OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE THROUGH CIVIC EDUCATION / RICULA

Year One of a National Demonstration Program

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Prevention of School Violence through Civic Education Curricula: Year One of a National Demonstration Program

Project directed by

Kenneth W. Tolo

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Foreword

The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs has established interdisciplinary research on policy problems as the core of its educational program. A major part of this program is the nine-month policy research project, in the course of which one or more faculty members from different disciplines direct the research of ten to thirty graduate students of diverse backgrounds on a policy issue of concern to a government or nonprofit agency. This "client orientation" brings the students face to face with administrators, legislators, and other officials active in the policy process and demonstrates that research in a policy environment demands special talents. It also illuminates the occasional difficulties of relating research findings to the world of political realities.

This report, which documents and assesses the first-year implementation process of a national program demonstrating the use of civic education curricula for the prevention of school violence in upper elementary middle schools, results from a policy research project commissioned by the Center for Civic Education in 1999–2000. Its recommendations highlight specific opportunities for strengthening this program and for expanding the use of civic education curricular materials for school violence prevention.

The curriculum of the LBJ School is intended not only to develop effective public servants but also to produce research that will enlighten and inform those already engaged in the policy process. The project set forth in this report has helped to accomplish the first task; it is our hope that the report itself will contribute to the second.

Finally, it should be noted that neither the LBJ School nor The University of Texas at Austin necessarily endorses the views or findings of this report.

Edwin Dorn
Dean

Acknowledgments

Project members acknowledge with special appreciation the advice, counsel, insights, and guidance of Center for Civic Education (CCE) officials; officials from state departments of education, especially state social studies specialists; and the school district officials, teachers, and students with whom project members visited during their research.

Thanks are especially due Lou Rosen, Charles Quigley, and John Hale at the CCE. Special thanks also go to the SVPDP site coordinators, site evaluators, district contacts, teachers, and students at the seven SVPDP 1999–2000 pilot sites: Los Angeles Unified School District, Denver Public Schools, Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, School District of Philadelphia, Wake County (NC) Public School System, and Community School District 23 and Community School District 30 in New York City. In addition, Catherine Clark at the Texas Center for Educational Research provided important guidance and assistance during the project. The knowledge and insights of these individuals significantly helped to inform the efforts of this study. Of course, project members remain solely responsible for errors of interpretation or omission.

Special thanks also are due Anthony Wier and the LBJ School Publications Office for their aid in preparing this report for publication.

Executive Summary

Over the last several years, our nation has faced the sobering reality that all too often our school-age children have been victims—and perpetrators—of once-unthinkable acts of violence. The horrible events in such sites as Jonesboro, Arkansas; Paducah, Kentucky; and Jefferson County, Colorado, have gripped the national consciousness, and school violence is now discussed with unsettling frequency. Few people, however, pause to consider what levels and types of violence actually occur in schools and what approaches to address school, parental, and community concerns about school violence might be most effective.

In 1999, the Center for Civic Education (CCE) initiated the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) as an alternative approach for reducing the level of students' antisocial and violent behavior in schools. This program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, implements curricular approaches to violence prevention drawing upon effective instructional practices and materials in civic education. The national implementation of the SVPDP by the CCE during 1999–2000 on a pilot basis in seven sites is premised on the belief that civic education for democracy can form the foundation for school-based violence prevention.

The CCE invited the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, to document and assess the first-year SVPDP implementation process. This report, the culmination of that effort, is organized into chapters that examine specific elements of the SVPDP implementation process, as observed and perceived by LBJ School researchers. Following a brief look at the state of violence prevention and civic education in American schools in chapter 1, chapter 2 outlines the 1999–2000 SVPDP research strategy and design, the program's first-year implementation plan, and the challenges of balancing the SVPDP's implementation and research objectives. Chapter 3 provides brief profiles of the seven first-year SVPDP pilot districts, highlighting characteristics shaping the program's implementation in each district. Chapters 4 through 8 assess in detail the seven pilot sites' first-year implementation of the SVPDP, identifying and examining the influence of the following classroom, school, school district, and community factors: SVPDP site coordinators and site evaluators; SVPDP teachers and teacher training workshops; SVPDP curricular materials and culminating activities; the physical, instructional, and policy environments of the SVPDP classrooms and schools; and SVPDP-related school district, parent, and community factors. Chapter 9 concludes the report by affirming the critical importance of curricula-based civic education programs such as the SVPDP, and recommends key action steps to support the sound, sustainable, and long-term use of civic education curricular materials for school violence prevention.

SVPDP Implementation: An Overview

Early in the first year of the SVPDP (1999–2000), carrying out the program successfully in each of the seven district sites became an increasingly important objective for the

CCE. The diversity of the sites resulted in different SVPDP implementation processes, and the CCE largely supported these deviations from the initial SVPDP research design so long as the goals of the program were not compromised. For example, if a district's SVPDP site coordinator decided that variations from the research design were necessary to optimize first-year SVPDP implementation and to increase the likelihood of longer-term district use of the CCE curricular materials for school violence prevention, the CCE generally accepted such variations, provided that the core elements of the design remained. The CCE realized that the SVPDP pilot sites needed such flexibility in order to meet their respective needs and interests. Factors that have affected implementation in the pilot sites have varied, and, at the same time, these factors have influenced the sites in different ways. In essence, the result has been seven different demonstration programs, with some common elements. Thus, while each site's SVPDP quantitative and qualitative research results have been very important to the CCE and to the district, and while these results can and should shape the future-year implementation of the SVPDP, it is questionable whether research results across all sites are comparable, given the implementation variations among the sites.

Factors Influencing SVPDP Implementation in the Pilot Districts

The following are summaries of the key insights emerging from researchers' examination of the major factors affecting the SVPDP implementation during its initial year.

Site Coordination and Site Evaluation

Much of the initial responsibility for completing the tasks of program implementation and evaluation fell to the districts' SVPDP site coordinators and evaluators. The success of the SVPDP in areas such as teacher training and curriculum integration resulted largely from the leadership skills, education experience, and commitment to civic education displayed by site coordinators in tackling and solving emerging implementation problems. Especially where site coordinators are current or former district employees, their extensive knowledge of district curricula and policy, and of administrators who can help increase district and school support, has been valuable during the SVPDP's first year. While district site evaluation has remained a key SVPDP component, it has been difficult to draw conclusions about its site evaluators after just one year of the program. The role of the SVPDP site evaluator changed dramatically during 1999-2000, with evaluator duties substantially reduced in scope and shifted to the CCE.

Teachers and Teacher Training Workshops

The SVPDP teachers are key in the implementation of this program. Their role as actual program implementers has made the SVPDP's first-year success possible. It is clear that the teachers who have participated in the SVPDP relish their important role. Even though they have faced challenges in carrying out the program, nearly all of them remained enthusiastic about both the goals of the program and their personal involvement in it. Many variables have shaped the teachers' program implementation during its first year, as well as their willingness to participate in it again. Though there are important exceptions, generally the SVPDP teachers have more education, more years of teaching

experience, and greater familiarity with civics and the CCE materials than do their non-SVPDP peers. Although the SVPDP teacher selection process was not random, which limits the research inferences that can be drawn across the pilot districts, there is little doubt that those who ultimately were selected have been instrumental in successfully implementing the SVPDP in all its pilot sites.

Curricular Materials and Culminating Activities

The great majority of SVPDP teachers and students have a favorable view of both the SVPDP curricular materials and the teaching methodologies endorsed by the CCE. Integrating SVPDP materials and activities into the regular school curricula has posed a challenge for them. As SVPDP teachers received increasing support during the first year of the program from site coordinators and other SVPDP participants, however, their perceptions of the difficulty of curriculum integration appear to have declined dramatically. The SVPDP's culminating activities are engaging and important: in pilot district sites, SVPDP teachers, administrators, and site coordinators, as well as the parents and community members, have been thoroughly impressed by student presentations and knowledge, and students also have been enthusiastic about the opportunities provided by the culminating activities.

Classroom and School Environments

A variety of classroom and school factors contribute to the physical, instructional, and policy environments shaping the implementation of the SVPDP. In addition, several actors such as teachers, students, administrators, and community members have helped shape these factors. Several physical environment factors, such as student class size, block scheduling and time flexibility, visual aids, classroom furniture, and "extras" such as computers and Internet access, have contributed to how successfully teachers have been able to use the SVPDP and how easily students have found it possible to carry out lessons and learn civics concepts and content. The teaching methods, instructional materials, and other techniques that teachers have employed influenced how students responded, learned, and achieved. Classroom and school policy environments also have contributed to successful SVPDP implementation, whether through leadership skills, classroom rules, strict discipline, or other means.

School Districts, Parents, and the Community

Factors external to the SVPDP and its participating schools also have shaped the program's implementation. Without the active participation and support of the school districts in which it is introduced, the SVPDP will have little impact on student learning and violence prevention in the schools. School district structures can help or hinder the SVPDP, so in future years the program should take these potential opportunities and difficulties into account. At the same time, parental and community involvement in the SVPDP culminating activities benefits them, as well as the schools, by increasing their involvement. Such participation also helps SVPDP students increase their confidence and understanding of what is involved in responsible citizenship.

New Directions in School Violence Prevention

The SVPDP is an example of a new direction in violence prevention education. Through civic education fostering and revitalizing civic participation, respect, tolerance, and interest in democracy, the SVPDP develops student skills that may directly reduce antisocial behavior and violence among youth, as well as students' understanding of and appreciation for democracy, the role of government, and individual rights. The program's curricular materials include civics concepts and content encompassing history, democratic concepts, and service learning, and its approach to teaching uses teamwork, group work, role play, writing, and student presentations to create a democratic classroom environment respectful of all its members. Students have a firsthand opportunity to learn that civic engagement and democratic resolution are the only acceptable avenues for dealing with conflict. This program, designed and implemented by the CCE, has produced promising results in its first year; it deserves attention and further research.

Additional steps to enhance the use and effectiveness of the SVPDP and other civic education curricular approaches to school violence prevention also should be taken. The CCE, working in partnership with its state and local networks, and other civic education and school violence prevention groups committed to such approaches, should take the lead in promoting a national effort to conduct and disseminate research on the effectiveness of curricular approaches that integrate civic education and engagement with school violence prevention. It also should promote a national conference, along with state dialogues on the effectiveness of such approaches to violence prevention. Finally, the CCE should continue to establish collaborations and networks among state K-12 education systems, national educator associations, teacher training institutions, community-based groups, and other organizations in order to reinforce and build on this research and dialogue.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Jonesboro, Arkansas; Columbine High School, Jefferson County, Colorado; Paducah, Kentucky—these names conjure up images of senseless violence and shattered innocence. The pictures of young people running from their schools and classrooms have imprinted themselves on our national consciousness. Sadly, these schools and communities—once unnoted and inconspicuous—have become unforgettable reminders that in modern American society some young people feel alienated from their communities and respond through school violence rather than through lives of informed and responsible citizenship.

Whether the violence is episodic or endemic, our nation is gripped with anxiety over potential violent acts committed by school-age children. These fears often overwhelm the nation's concerns about the critical importance of providing students a quality education for work, life, and citizenship, as well as the quality teachers and curricula appropriate and necessary for such an education. The phrase "school violence" rolls off the collective tongue quite easily, present in our daily life and common lexicon as a major national concern—and a major school concern. Yet few people pause to consider what levels and types of violence actually occur in schools, and what alternatives exist to address school, parental, and community concerns about school violence.

In 1999, the Center for Civic Education (CCE) invited the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin to assist it in assessing the implementation of its civic education curricula-based School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) in upper elementary and middle schools in seven school districts across the United States. The U.S. Congress initiated this demonstration program in response to the incidents of school violence seemingly ever-present in news media reports, and the CCE was given the responsibility for the program in light of its three decades of leadership in K-12 civic education in the United States. The LBJ School assessment presented in this report focuses on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the demonstration program's initial year (1999–2000) and recommending actions both to strengthen the demonstration program during its second year (2000–2001) and to foster the greater use of civic education curricula as a possible long-term strategy in school violence prevention.

Violence, and more specifically school violence, has become synonymous with school shootings. Gun violence is by far the most egregious form of violent act but it alone does not fully encompass what is meant by the term "violence." For the purposes of this report, "violence" can be more broadly defined to include such acts as bullying, harassment, fighting, intimidation, assault, rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, attempted murder, and murder.

This chapter highlights the state of school violence and school violence prevention in America today, as well as the state of civic education in our K-12 education system. It

also briefly describes CCE and its programs, outlines the project plan on which this report is based, and provides a brief overview of the entire report.

Violence and Violence Prevention in American Schools

In August 1999, the Vera Institute of Justice published a report that examined four public school safety strategies of the nation's five largest cities: security staff in schools, security systems, reporting of school safety incidents, and school safety programs that engage parents and communities in making schools safe.[1] The safety strategies of Los Angeles, New York, and Philadelphia, three cities with schools participating in the first-year implementation of the SVPDP, provide examples of current efforts to make schools safer.

In Los Angeles, the Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office, established by the California Board of Education in 1983, administers programs on school safety issues. Among the many initiatives is a $3.6 million effort to target High-Risk Youth First-Time Offenders.[2] In 1997, the state legislature required Los Angeles to develop a County Master Plan on School Safety, which is a five-year strategic plan, to identify school safety needs.[3] In addition, since the 1950s, the Los Angeles Unified School District has had a School Police Department, which in 1999 had an annual budget of $28 million and employed 307 officers to serve a student population of more than 900,000.[4]

In New York City, the Police Department (NYPD) provides schools with nearly 3,400 school safety agents, who do not carry weapons but who are authorized to make arrests. In each of the five boroughs, the NYPD command centers provide a school safety coordinator.[5] With its nearly 1.1 million students, the public school system in New York City is the fourth largest weapons-scanning operation in the United States. There are 70 schools with metal detectors, of which 63 detectors are permanent school fixtures and seven are random scanning devices. Each scanning device requires nine school safety agents to operate it.[6]

In 1995, the Center for Safe Schools was created as part of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Among other responsibilities, the center has worked closely with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to establish a program in Philadelphia called Blueprints for Violence Prevention.[7] With its own student population of almost 200,000, the School District of Philadelphia has had its own police department since 1993. Officers can detain but not arrest students, and they do not carry weapons; each school can have from one to ten officers assigned to it. The School District of Philadelphia also uses scanning devices and metal detectors in its schools. The district's annual budget for both school safety equipment and school safety personnel totals $19 million.[8]

With comprehensive school safety plans such as these in place in three of the largest school systems in the country, it is not surprising that citizens believe the incidence of violence in the schools has been rising. This perception does not exactly fit the reality, however. For example, from 1993 to 1997 the overall number of school-related crimes against students declined. The number of incidents per 1,000 students fell in each of the

following categories: Overall Crime (from 155 to 102), Theft (from 96 to 63), Violent Crime (from 59 to 40), and Serious Violent Crime (i.e., rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault) (from 12 to 8).[9] Indeed,

> children are safer in schools than in the community or at home. Less than 1% of the 2,500 child homicides and suicides during the last 6 months of 1997 took place at school or on the way to and from school. There were also significant decreases between 1993 and 1997 in the percentages of high school students who carried a weapon on school property or were involved in a physical fight at school.[10]

A recently published report from the Justice Policy Institute confirms the rarity of school homicides, noting that a child's chances of being killed at school are only one in two million. Nevertheless, nearly three-quarters of Americans in a recent poll reported that they believe a shooting could happen in their neighborhood school.[11]

Moreover, students often feel unsafe in schools, and high levels of crime, threats, and intimidation continue to be reported by students. In 1989, about nine percent of all students reported being victimized at school at least once during a six-month period, while a Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey conducted a few years later by Louis Harris and Associates, Inc., reported that 23 percent of students and 11 percent of teachers have been victimized in or around school. Actions perpetrated against students included theft, use of a gun or a knife, kicking and hitting with a fist, pushing and slapping, threats, and verbal insults.[12]

While some persons might argue that such acts as verbal threats are not really school violence, they significantly disrupt the learning and teaching processes in schools, cause students to withdraw from participation in school activities and discussions, and often provide warnings of subsequent student actions that are more violent. Moreover, research suggests that curtailing the level of so-called minor disruptions may in fact reduce the risk of more serious violence.[13] In short, any crime, threatening action, or other type of violence or violence-inducing behavior in a school is troubling, and schools have a responsibility to their students, parents, and communities to provide a learning environment that is safe and supportive for education for life, work, and citizenship.

American schools, educators, and policymakers have chosen to deal with violence in our schools by using a variety of methods, often combined in different ways. One approach is to seek to control or eliminate violent student behavior through changes in a school's physical environment (e.g., metal detectors, security guards) or social atmosphere (e.g., after-school sports programs). Another is to seek to prevent school violence through school management initiatives (e.g., discipline codes, cooperative relationships between police departments and schools). Yet another way to address school violence prevention is through educational programs (e.g., curricular and noncurricular programs); for example, anger management, conflict resolution, peer mediation, and intervention programs exist today in thousands of schools and classrooms across the country.[14]

Not unlike the "Just Say NO" campaigns of the 1980s, the emphasis in school violence prevention generally has been on increased school security and on the negation of students' harmful behavior. Federal initiatives since the mid-1990s (e.g., the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994) have sought to reduce school violence through violence prevention and education programs, training and technical assistance, and community programs. For example, on April 15, 2000, in commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the Columbine High School tragedy, President Clinton announced three new initiatives: more than $41 million in Safe Schools/Healthy Students grants to 23 communities for comprehensive school violence prevention planning, $60 million in COPS in Schools grants to hire 452 school resource officers in 223 communities nationwide, and $20 million for a new program to fund counselors in elementary schools.[15]

Generally lacking in these federal initiatives, as well as in those funded by state governments, local school districts, and other organizations, however, is any significant attention to addressing school violence prevention through school curricula designed to help students become informed and responsible citizens who respect the rights and lives of others. Schools and school districts often underuse or fail to use such civic education curricula because they are perceived as less important than, say, mathematics, English, and science. Yet such curricula provide schools and communities an opportunity to strengthen young people's civic knowledge, participation, and dispositions and, thus, lessen the likelihood that students will engage in various forms and levels of school violence.

Civic Education in American Schools

It is essential that the American public be enlightened, informed, and engaged. Thomas Jefferson stated, "Every government degenerates when trusted to the ruler of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe their minds must be improved to a certain degree."[16]

Civic education strengthens the qualities of civic virtue, civic knowledge, and civic participation. It seeks to

1. "foster among citizens **civic dispositions** and commitments to fundamental values and principles required for competent and responsible citizenship";

2. "provide citizens the **knowledge and intellectual skills** required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems"; and

3. "develop among citizens the **participatory skills** required to monitor and influence the formulation, implementation, adjudication, and enforcement of public policy, as well as to participate in voluntary efforts to solve neighborhood and community problems."[17]

Civic education is critical to ensuring "the widest possible civic participation of its citizens consistent with the public good and the protection of individual rights. The aim of civic education is therefore not just any kind of participation by any kind of citizen; it is the participation of **informed** and **responsible** citizens, skilled in the arts of deliberation and effective action."[18] By extension, these informed and responsible citizens will be committed to democratic values and will develop a true appreciation for the "relevance of a civic dimension for their lives."[19]

Despite these noble goals, policymakers, educators, and schools seldom give civic dispositions, knowledge, and skills the attention they deserve—and that students deserve. As the National Association of Secretaries of State reported in early 1999, based on a national bipartisan poll and focus groups of 15- to 24-year-olds, "Young people today lack interest, trust, and knowledge about American politics, politicians, and public life generally." The least trusting youth are those who are the most disengaged. Moreover, "youth identify with the specific rights associated with citizenship, but have only vague ideas about [their] public responsibilities."[20]

Further attesting to the lack of civic knowledge, engagement, and dispositions among youth are the results of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) national civics assessments. As spelled out by the National Assessment Government Board, which sets the policy and overall framework for NAEP, the "NAEP is not a national test; however, it is a barometer or broad indicator of how much and how well students are learning." For each of grades 4, 8, and 12, this assessment "is intended to show students' civic knowledge and skills in terms of a set of achievement levels"—basic, proficient, and advanced.[21] The most recent NAEP civics assessment (and the only one since 1988) was conducted in 1998. What is alarming about the 1998 NAEP civics results, which were released in November 1999, is that about three-fourths of American youth fall below the proficient level in civic knowledge and skills at all three of these grade levels.[22] This is a "direct consequence of the widespread lack of adequate [civics] requirements … and instruction in civics and government"—and studies have shown that quality civics programs lead to greater student tolerance of opposing views and other attitudes that promote responsible student citizenship in schools and communities.[23]

These findings suggest that our education system often has failed to give appropriate and high-priority attention to enhancing students' civic dispositions, knowledge, and skills. Unfortunately, such neglect of civic education may well have implications throughout American society. In his recent research on the collapse and revival of American community, Robert Putnam outlines the dramatic decline in the social cohesion of the United States from 1960 to today. Civic participation, as exhibited in group memberships, church attendance, and community activities, has declined over 60 percent during the course of the last three decades. Putnam cites an overwhelming sense of social isolation in modern American society, and postulates that the effects of this decline in social engagement have very severe consequences on national health, productivity, crime, and general well-being. Within our socially disengaged and isolated society, he views children as the "canaries in a coal mine."[24]

If it is true that children act as a social barometer, our nation's fear of school violence—and perhaps the outbreaks of school violence we have experienced in recent years—may have as much to do with a loss of societal civility, a lack of civic participation and civic understanding by young and old alike, and a system of K-12 education that gives inadequate attention to fostering civic dispositions, knowledge, and skills as it has to do with a growing subculture of intolerant and emotionally isolated youth.

But school efforts to augment students' civic dispositions, knowledge, and skills need not occur only in civics courses. Incorporating civics content into other social studies and related courses also serves that goal. In a report from the Danforth Foundation and the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, the National Task Force on Citizenship Education cites a plethora of applications and the implications of civic educational curricula. The task force found that civic education can be appropriately applied in (1) traditional academic disciplines (e.g., history), (2) law-related education (e.g., legal processes, Bill of Rights), (3) social problems (e.g., crime, pollution), (4) critical thinking, (5) values clarification, (6) moral development, (7) community involvement, and (8) reform of the schools as institutions within which civic education occurs.[25] These curricular areas are present in school systems today, and provide many excellent opportunities for the incorporation and application of civic education materials.

A critical question is whether increasing schools' attention to enhancing their students' civic dispositions, civic knowledge, and civic engagement, and to enhancing the schools' civic climate, would foster greater student openness toward and acceptance by their institutions, their fellow students and teachers, and their communities. What if our nation's collective efforts at diminishing school violence shifted focus *away* from acts of violence and *toward* school curricula and curricular materials and what students learn? Would it lessen the likelihood that a youth would feel isolated and angry—and that an isolated and angry youth might resort to violence—if civic education curricula were infused in social studies courses? Might such an infusion lessen students' social isolation and school violence and foster a more supportive learning environment for all students in their respective schools?

These are the types of questions underlying the CCE's interest in addressing school violence prevention through the systematic use of its civic education materials in upper elementary and middle school curricula. To provide a context for this report's analyses, the next section summarizes the CCE's mission, history, and programs.

Center for Civic Education: Mission and History

The Center for Civic Education (CCE) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan education organization based in California and supported by a network of program coordinators in every state in the country. The CCE specializes in civic and citizenship education, law-related education, and international civic education exchange programs in developing democracies, especially in eastern and central Europe and the former Soviet Union. Its programs focus on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; American political traditions

and federal, state, and local institutions; constitutionalism; civic participation; and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.[26]

Table 1.1
Center for Civic Education Programs and Publications

National Standards for Civics and Government A set of K-12 exit standards specifying what students should know and be able to do in the field of civics and government. The *Standards* have been widely endorsed by civic and professional groups; have drawn praise in the press and in the *Congressional Record*; and are being used by states and local school districts throughout the U.S.
CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education A model curriculum framework for the nation's elementary and secondary schools. *CIVITAS* sets forth the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and commitments necessary for effective citizenship. Major topics include civic virtue, civic participation, and civic knowledge and skills.
We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution A civic education curriculum focusing on the history and principles of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. The culminating activity is a simulated congressional hearing, which is a performance assessment model for all grade levels. The curriculum supports most state social studies frameworks in the areas of civics and government.
We the People... Project Citizen A middle school civic participation program in which students work together to identify and propose remedies for public issues in their communities. The program encourages civic participation among students, their parents, and members of their communities.
Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice *Foundations of Democracy* is a curriculum consisting of materials for students from primary school through the 12th grade on four concepts fundamental to an understanding of politics and government.
American Legacy: The United States Constitution and Other Essential Documents of American Democracy A pocket-size booklet containing the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, together with passages from other documents that encompass essential ideas of American democracy.
Comparative Lessons for Democracy A resource book for high school teachers developed as part of Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program. The 35 lesson plans and resource materials engage students in comparative analyses of the emerging democracies of central and eastern Europe, including their histories and transitions.
Exercises in Participation Series A curriculum designed to develop intellectual and participatory skills for upper elementary and middle school students. It includes *Violence in the Schools: Developing Prevention Plans* and *Drugs in the Schools: Preventing Substance Abuse*.

Source: Center for Civic Education, "Center Programs & Publications," *Center Correspondent*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Winter 2000), p. 15.

The CCE had its origins in the Committee on Civic Education, which was formed at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1964. The committee recognized the need for a civic education curriculum that extended beyond California's history. The goal of the

committee was to help teachers and students gain a better understanding of their government and to prepare them to be engaged citizens.

The Committee on Civic Education worked to develop civic education curricular programs for kindergarten through 12th grade students. In 1969, the State Bar of California asked the Committee on Civic Education to develop a statewide civic education program. Called the Law in a Free Society project, it was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and focused on the major concepts and principles of constitutional democracy: authority, privacy, responsibility, and justice. In 1981, the Committee on Civic Education created a nonprofit organization called the Center for Civic Education (CCE).[27]

The CCE's mission is to "promote informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy." The goals of the CCE's programs are to help students develop (1) an increased understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded, (2) the skills necessary to participate as effective and responsible citizens, and (3) the willingness to use democratic procedures for making decisions and managing conflict.[28]

The CCE develops and administers curricular, teacher training, and community-based programs that feature cooperative learning and develop students' problem-solving skills. Table 1.1 contains summaries of the CCE's primary programs and publications.

Project Plan

During 1997–98 and 1998–99, the LBJ School of Public Affairs assessed the implementation of CCE's *We the People... Project Citizen* (*Project Citizen*), and examined the influences of state policies and school district practices on the civic education provided students in American secondary schools.[29] The findings in the final reports from these two projects demonstrate the significance and importance of civic education in the schools and communities that have incorporated the CCE materials in their curricula.

In 1999, the CCE initiated its newest program, the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP). This program, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, seeks to develop school-based approaches to violence prevention that draw upon effective instructional practices and curricular materials in civic education. The implementation of the SVPDP by the CCE on a pilot basis in seven sites nationally during 1999–2000 is premised on the belief that civic education for democracy can form the foundation for school-based violence prevention.

The CCE invited the LBJ School of Public Affairs to document and assess the first-year SVPDP experience, and to identify classroom, school, school district, and community factors shaping the implementation of the SVPDP and examine their effects on the process of enacting the program. This project was conducted between September 1999 and May 2000. The LBJ School's research team, led by Professor Kenneth Tolo,

consisted of 16 graduate students with substantial professional experience in diverse public, private, and nonprofit organizations, especially those concerned with education.

The primary questions addressed by the project researchers were:

1. How are the SVPDP participants in the pilot district sites shaping the implementation of the program?

2. What school and school district characteristics, policies, practices, and other factors are influencing the SVPDP implementation and may affect the program's outcomes? What community characteristics, civic activities, collaborations with the schools, and other factors are influencing the SVPDP implementation and may affect the program's outcomes?

3. What are the student, teacher, and school and district administrator perceptions of the SVPDP and its potential for school violence prevention?

As background for the project, the researchers sought to identify school-based programs that use civic education as a violence prevention strategy. They solicited information from state social studies specialists in all states and the District of Columbia through a written questionnaire (see appendix A) and through World Wide Web searches. Although the questionnaire response rate was less than 30 percent and the responses overall were not particularly encouraging, a few states reported that they incorporate diverse violence prevention programs in their history, government, civics, and other social studies courses. For example, Hawaii reported the use of character education, peace making, conflict resolution, anger management, and related programs. In Vermont, schools have incorporated into their courses materials on such topics as character education, anger management, peer mediation, anti-harassment, and zero tolerance for fighting. Adopting a more direct approach, Alabama includes a program on violence in schools in its government and social studies courses in grades seven through nine, as well as a program on teens, crime, and community. Other states reporting the use of similar programs were Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia. Another strategy exists in North Carolina, where the Center for the Prevention of School Violence has assumed a leading role, both within the state and nationally, in advising school districts and schools on the adoption and use of a wide range of curricular and noncurricular approaches to school violence prevention.[30]

The LBJ School project assessment has complemented and supported the work of the CCE and its SVPDP participants at each of the seven first-year pilot sites, namely, Los Angeles Unified School District, Denver Public Schools, Jefferson County (CO) Public Schools, School District of Philadelphia, Wake County (NC) Public School System, and two New York City districts: Community School District 23 in Brooklyn and Community School District 30 in Queens. During their visits to these districts, the researchers met with the SVPDP coordinator, the SVPDP evaluator, and the SVPDP teachers at each site, as well as with other school district and community representatives, as appropriate. Researchers also observed classes and teacher training workshops in which the SVPDP

materials were being used, and distributed two questionnaires to all SVPDP teachers (see appendices B and C).

The CCE selected the seven pilot district sites, as well as the participating SVPDP schools and teachers in these sites, in summer 1999, before the start of the LBJ School project. The school year in each of these sites thus began prior to the start of the LBJ School project and extended beyond its completion. As a result, the researchers did not participate with the CCE in designing the overall SVPDP research and program plan, in the design of the implementation plan or the selection of the SVPDP sites or participants, or in the design, administration, or analysis of the civic education attitudinal and knowledge tests given at the beginning and end of the 1999–2000 school year to students both in the SVPDP classrooms and in the control classrooms in each of the district sites. These tasks, as well as the conducting of parent and student focus groups, and the planning and conducting of teacher training sessions, were the responsibility of the CCE and other SVPDP participants.

Overview of Report

This report provides a comprehensive look at the first year that the SVPDP was used in the seven pilot district sites. It focuses on the actual SVPDP implementation process in these sites, with particular attention paid to the questions noted in the LBJ School project plan. The report is organized into chapters focused on specific elements of the SVPDP process, as observed and perceived by the researchers.

Chapter 2 outlines the 1999–2000 SVPDP research strategy and design, the program's first-year implementation plan, and the challenges CCE faced in balancing the objective of achieving successful SVPDP classroom implementation with that of obtaining research results validating the SVPDP's effectiveness. Chapter 3 gives brief demographic and education overviews of the seven first-year SVPDP pilot districts, highlighting characteristics that have shaped the program.

Chapters 4 through 8 document and assess the implementation of the SVPDP in the seven pilot sites during its first year. Chapter 4 examines the roles and responsibilities of the SVPDP site coordinators and site evaluators. Chapter 5 summarizes the backgrounds of the SVPDP teachers and their perceptions of the program, explores their role as program implementers and some of the obstacles challenging them, and examines the SVPDP teacher training workshops and selected best practices shared among the sites. Chapter 6 looks at the SVPDP's first-year implementation and the integration of its curricular materials, including the instructional approaches used by teachers and the alignment of its materials to district and state curricular requirements; it also examines the SVPDP's culminating activities and the responses of the pilot sites to the recommended inclusion of these activities in the first year of the program. In chapter 7, LBJ School researchers address the classroom and school factors shaping SVPDP implementation in its first year by presenting their experiences visits to participating sites. Chapter 8 examines school district, parent, and community factors shaping program implementation. Each of these

five chapters includes recommendations for strengthening the future effectiveness of the SVPDP.

Chapter 9 concludes the report by reaffirming the critical importance of school-based civic education programs such as the SVPDP in revitalizing students' civic knowledge, participation, and dispositions, and in fostering cooperative, democratic, and nonviolent classrooms, schools, and communities. It offers recommendations that support the sound, sustainable, and long-term use of civic education curricular materials for school violence prevention, and reinforce the action steps recommended in chapters 4 through 8. Finally, to illustrate the first-year implementation of the SVPDP, scenarios observed by the researchers in the seven district sites are interspersed among the chapters of the report.

Notes

[1] Vera Institute of Justice, *Approaches to School Safety in America's Largest Cities* (New York, New York, August 1999), p. 1.

[2] Ibid., p. 17.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 19.

[5] Ibid., p. 24.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., p. 27.

[8] Ibid., p. 30.

[9] P. Kaufman et al., *Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 1999* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, 1998), as cited in Center on Education Policy and American Youth Policy Forum, "Do You Know the Good News about American Education?" (Washington, D.C., 1999), p. 22.

[10] Center on Education Policy and American Youth Policy Forum, *Do You Know the Good News about American Education?* (Washington, D.C., 1999), p. 22.

[11] Mike Bowler, "School Violence Less Than Thought," *Baltimore Sun*, April 12, 2000, p. 1A.

[12] Alexander Volokh with Lisa Snell, *School Violence Prevention: Strategies to Keep Schools Safe*, Policy Study No. 234L (Los Angeles, California: Reason Public Policy Institute, January 1998), p. 6. Online. Available: http://www.rppi.org/ps234.html. Accessed: April 25, 2000.

[13] Russell J. Skiba and Reece L. Peterson, "School Discipline at a Crossroads: From Zero Tolerance to Early Response," *Exceptional Children*, vol. 66, no. 3 (Spring 2000), p. 336.

[14] Volokh, *School Violence Prevention: Strategies to Keep Schools Safe*, p. 16.

[15] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "President Clinton Announces New Initiatives to Combat and Prevent Youth Violence," Press Release, Washington, D.C., April 15, 2000, p. 1.

[16] Charles N. Quigley and Charles F. Bahmueller, ed., *CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education* (Calabasas, California: Center for Civic Education, 1991), p. 1.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p. 3.

[19] Ibid., p. 5.

[20] National Association of Secretaries of State, *New Millenium Project—Phase I* (Washington, D.C., January 1999), pp. 5-7. Online. Available: http://www.nass.org/nass99/youthvtr1.pdf. Accessed: March 28, 1999.

[21] National Assessment Governing Board, *Civics Framework for the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C., 1998), pp. vi-vii.

[22] Anthony D. Lutkus et al., "Executive Summary," *NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, November 1999). Online. Available: http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pubs/main1998/20000457.shtml. Accessed: November 26, 1999.

[23] Center for Civic Education, "Civics Study Spurs National Campaign to Promote Civic Education," *Center Correspondent*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Winter 2000), p. 2.

[24] Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community," Lecture, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas, April 17, 2000.

[25] B. Frank Brown, ed., *Education for Responsible Citizenship: The Report of the National Task Force on Citizenship Education.* The Danforth Foundation and the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Charles F. Kettering Foundation (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1977), pp. 180-185.

[26] Center for Civic Education, *About the Center for Civic Education.* Online. Available: http://www.civiced.org. Accessed: May 1, 2000.

[27] Center for Civic Education, *History of the Center for Civic Education.* Online. Available: http://www.civiced.org. Accessed: May 1, 2000.

[28] Center for Civic Education, *About the Center for Civic Education.*

[29] Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, *An Assessment of* We the People... Project Citizen*: Promoting Citizenship in Classrooms and Communities*, Policy Research Project Report No. 129 (Austin, Texas, 1998); and Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, *The Civic Education of American Youth: From State Policies to School District Practices*, Policy Research Project Report No. 133 (Austin, Texas, 1999).

[30] LBJ School Violence Prevention Program Questionnaire for CS4 Members, January 2000.

Chapter 2. School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) Design and Implementation

In late 1998, the U.S. Congress endorsed the belief that "civic education for democracy can form the foundation for school-based violence prevention" and included $1 million in the U.S. Department of Education (ED) fiscal year 1999 appropriations for the Center for Civic Education (CCE) "to study the impact of [CCE] curricula on antisocial behavior among children and youth within a school setting."[1] The CCE, under the leadership of Lou Rosen, author of numerous books and articles on school violence prevention and effective school discipline, began its planning for this study in spring 1999. Its objective was to implement during the 1999–2000 school year a small-scale, research-focused civic education curricula-based violence prevention demonstration program in selected schools in urban and rapidly growing suburban school districts across the country. This new CCE program, called the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP), included the most comprehensive research project ever attempted by the CCE on its programs.

Inspiration for the design and implementation of the SVPDP came from many sources, including the CCE's programs and research as well as outside research on the topic of youth violence prevention. The CCE and the various SVPDP participants discovered early in the program's first year, however, that the realities of implementation have not exactly matched the program's original design. Such variations are not negative; at the same time, they are important, because they have affected the research conclusions that can be drawn from an assessment of the program's first year. To assist in this assessment, the CCE invited the LBJ School to document and evaluate the first-year SVPDP implementation process, as well as to identify classroom, school, school district, and community factors shaping it.

This chapter outlines the 1999–2000 SVPDP research strategy and design; it includes a review of selected research findings from prior studies and a review of the SVPDP research design components. The chapter then elaborates the key elements of the SVPDP implementation plan and the CCE's initial implementation steps in summer and fall 1999. It concludes by examining some of the challenges that the CCE has faced.

SVPDP Research Strategy and Design

In implementing the SVPDP, the CCE made an initial decision at the start to use existing CCE curricular materials and programs, rather than create new curricula. In addition, it modeled the SVPDP research design on one it used in a 1995–97 assessment of the influence of citizenship and law-related education on violent and antisocial behavior conducted in conjunction with the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) in Bell Gardens Intermediate School, Montebello Unified School District, California. Underlying the CCE's use of civic education curricula for school violence prevention are

research findings that show that uncivil and antisocial behavior by youth often leads to more violent behavior, and that civic education curricula (e.g., CCE materials) strengthen students' civic knowledge, civic participation, and civic dispositions (and thus foster their constructive civil and social behavior).

This section first reviews selected research literature on school violence and school violence prevention; then outlines the CCE project in Bell Gardens and its research design; and concludes with a description of the research design developed in summer 1999 by the CCE for assessing the SVPDP and its student outcomes.

Research Review

The literature on violence prevention has identified several characteristics of promising school-based violence prevention programs. These include a comprehensive approach; an early start and long-term commitment; parental and community involvement; and a culturally sensitive and developmentally appropriate approach.[2] Daniel Linz, a professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara, notes other aspects that show promise:

> For example, training adolescents to empathize with others, consider the consequences of their behaviors, and make responsible choices in problem solving sessions has been shown to decrease the likelihood that they will commit violence. Interventions that provide training in more than one of these areas are usually the most successful.[3]

A report from the National Institute of Justice echoes this view, reporting that successful crime prevention efforts in schools include "organizational development for innovation"; "communication and reinforcement of clear, consistent norms"; "teaching of social competency skills"; and "coaching of high-risk youth in 'thinking skills'."[4]

Comprehensive approaches, which combine social instruction, classroom strategies for disruptive behavior, parental involvement, crisis and security planning, and schoolwide discipline and behavioral planning, appear to work better than reliance on more narrowly focused programs. For instance, "harsh and punitive disciplinary strategies have not proven sufficient to foster a school climate that can prevent the occurrence of school violence."[5] In general, the research literature suggests that the most effective violence prevention programs take comprehensive approaches and communicate pro-social norms and skills.

Understanding why this is so requires examining views about the nature of violent behavior in schools. A consensus is emerging in the literature that uncivil and antisocial behavior in schools is linked to more violent episodes. For instance, a 1998 National Center for Education Statistics report found "a clear relationship" between relatively minor incidents of school disruption and more serious school violence.[6] Other research suggests that "behaviors that indicate incivility, such as rumors, verbal intimidation and threats, pushing and shoving by students, and sexual harassment," contribute greatly to a higher anxiety about safety in schools as they become more frequent in classrooms and

hallways.[7] Overall, the research literature supports the argument that "the problem of violence in our schools is related to a breakdown in civility."[8]

A National Institute of Justice study helps, in part, to explain the link between relatively minor school discipline infractions and more serious violent incidents. It found that the largest proportion of violent incidents in schools began with relatively minor, nonviolent affronts that then escalated into serious episodes, even though the participants originally did not intend violence to occur.[9] This study also concluded, "What is perhaps most troubling is the finding that the students' behavior did *not* stem from lack of values. Rather, it was grounded in a well-developed set of values that holds such behavior to be a justifiable, common sense way to achieve certain goals."[10] Violence followed directly from what at first seemed only to be a minor incident, and that violence was guided by a comprehensive world view that suggests such violence is an acceptable means of conflict resolution.

One can thus see how comprehensive approaches appear to work better at reducing school violence because they tend to reduce the number of seemingly minor, less significant disruptions. "By implementing comprehensive programs that improve overall school climate and reduce minor disruptions," write Russell Skiba of Indiana University and Reece Peterson of the University of Nebraska, "schools may also be reducing the risk of more serious violent incidents that appear to be associated with higher levels of minor disruption."[11] Daniel Lockwood confirms this: "Reducing the occurrence of opening moves appears to be the most promising approach to preventing escalation of violence."[12] The literature suggests, therefore, that programs that address and reduce uncivil behavior by students should both lessen the overall perception of school violence and curtail the actual frequency with which the most violent episodes occur.

Despite a proliferation of programs aimed at preventing violence, however, there has been relatively little scientific evaluation of the effectiveness of such efforts. According to Skiba and Peterson, this gap between research and practice leaves "schools with insufficient resources to cope with current serious problems of disruption and violence."[13] Moreover, much of the research to evaluate violence prevention programs has been conducted in ways that lessen its validity. For instance, some studies do not have a control group with characteristics resembling those of the treated group.[14] Other studies fail to use pretest and posttest measures to assess changes in student attitudes and behavior, and fail to measure the long-term effects of the intervention.[15] Thus, even though research has identified promising areas in violence prevention, more needs to be done to confirm those findings.

In 1999, the CCE was familiar with this research suggesting that comprehensive approaches seeking to reduce uncivil behavior appeared to be promising avenues for violence prevention. Previous studies had already demonstrated that the CCE's curricular materials could enhance, among other things, students' "tolerance of opposing views."[16] Thus the CCE believed that its curricular materials could, by improving students' civility towards one another and enhancing students' civic knowledge, participation, and dispositions, be the centerpiece of an effective school violence prevention program.

Moreover, there has been a lack of programs using a curricula-based approach to reduce school violence—a deficit that could be served well by the CCE's curricular materials. Taken together, these considerations formed the background and context for the CCE's SVPDP research design and implementation plan.

Bell Gardens Project

An earlier CCE violence prevention initiative that was important in shaping the SVPDP research design was the Bell Gardens project. During 1995–97, the CCE and the Constitutional Rights Foundation (CRF) conducted an evaluation of citizenship and law-related instruction in one Los Angeles area middle school, namely, Bell Gardens Intermediate School, Montebello Unified School District. This study was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention as part of its "Youth for Justice: National Coordinated Law-Related Education Program." The purpose of the evaluation was to "assess whether citizenship [and] law-related instruction, when properly implemented, can reduce certain types of violent and antisocial behavior in [upper elementary and middle] schools."[17]

The goals of this "Youth for Justice" program were "to assess the extent to which citizenship/law-related education"

1. "increases student knowledge of key concepts, e.g., community, authority, justice, responsibility";

2. "improves those critical-thinking skills which research shows influence how students perceive and resolve conflicts, e.g., identifying cause and effect, generating alternative solutions, assessing consequences";

3. "increases those social skills which research shows influence how students relate to one another and in groups, e.g., perspective talking, flexible thinking, communication"; and

4. "changes students' attitudes which research shows are important to preventing violence and antisocial behavior, e.g., bonding to school and community, locus of control."[18]

The Bell Gardens project included the use of several CCE and CRF instructional materials. The CCE materials used were *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution* (*We the People*); *Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice* (*Foundations of Democracy*); and *Violence in the Schools: Developing Prevention Plans* (*Violence in the Schools*) (see table 1.1 for program descriptions). The CCE and CRF materials were integrated with the Bell Gardens fifth- and sixth-grade social studies curriculum, in cooperation with the Bell Gardens teachers.[19]

Designed and conducted by UCLA professor Matash Esfandiari, in coordination with Lou Rosen, the Bell Gardens evaluation used a comparison of experimental and control

classrooms to evaluate the effect of citizenship and law-related education on violent behavior. Each of the experimental and the control groups consisted of one fifth-grade class and one sixth-grade class, and the two groups were matched on "teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and the students' level of proficiency in the English language."[20] Included in the evaluation were 12 students that the school administration determined were "at risk" of being antisocial or behaving violently. The researchers were particularly interested in assessing the influence of citizenship and law-related education on such at-risk students.

Evaluators used quantitative and qualitative methods to gauge the effect of the intervention on the experimental group. The quantitative methods included pretesting and posttesting the civic knowledge and the attitudes of the students in both the experimental and the control groups. The knowledge test was different for each grade level; both versions questioned students on the history and the principles of the U.S. Constitution and on their comprehension of the development of laws and community. The attitude survey gauged students' views on authority, community, pro-social behavior, cooperation, rules, and the police. Among the qualitative measures were focus groups with students from both the experimental and control classrooms, classroom observations, and interviews with teachers. At the end of the year the evaluators also observed students in the experimental group as they prepared and presented either a service learning project or a simulated congressional hearing, and they compared students' behavior then with behavior observed at the beginning of the intervention.

These quantitative and qualitative measures showed clearly that the Bell Gardens curricular intervention (i.e., the use of the CCE and the CRF curricular materials) had a strong and positive effect on students' knowledge of key concepts such as community, authority, justice, and responsibility. More mixed conclusions were drawn on the influence of citizenship and law-related education on students' attitudes toward authority, pro-social behavior, cooperation, rules, community, and the police. Quantitative measures did not indicate that the attitudes of either fifth- or sixth-grade students were significantly altered by the intervention. For both fifth and sixth grades, however, the evaluators concluded that "the qualitative measures suggest that the subjects learned to value working in cooperative groups, acting in a pro-social manner, and increased their ability to solve problems related to authority."[21] In the case of the at-risk youths, even though there was no control group available to verify the impact of the intervention on them, and only qualitative measures were used because of the small size of the at-risk group, the students themselves concluded that the intervention helped them to have fewer discipline problems and to behave better.[22]

In addition to these findings, the results of the Bell Gardens project suggested to the researchers several recommendations about future interventions of its kind. First, the evaluators felt that participating teachers should spend at least two years with the curriculum, because in the second year of the Bell Gardens project teachers "were much more confident, used the material more often, and did a much better job of teaching to the goals of the curriculum."[23] Moreover, the Bell Gardens project evaluation concluded that the project's second-year teachers should play an active role in the teacher training

workshops used to train future participating teachers. Thus, even though the Bell Gardens project was limited in its scope, it provided some understanding of the relationship between civic education and school violence prevention.

SVPDP Research Design

The research strategy underlying the CCE's implementation of the SVPDP has been to "focus on the principle that attaining cognitive and social skills is a form of violence prevention and providing students with opportunities to engage in high quality civic education and group participation strategies will help students refrain from violence."[24] Through the SVPDP, the CCE has sought "to demonstrate that the use of regular civic education curricular materials, properly taught by well-trained teachers, can have an effect on student respect toward authority and the law, feelings of social isolation, and tolerance toward the ideas of others."[25]

To this end, the CCE based the SVPDP research design in general on that used in the Bell Gardens project. That is, the CCE decided to use a curricular intervention approach built around in-school use of CCE civic education curricular materials, frequent teacher training workshops, and pretests and posttests of experimental classroom and control classroom students' civic knowledge and attitudes. In particular,

> The [SVPDP] hopes to demonstrate that the use of quality civic education curricular materials and interactive, performance based teaching strategies will result in improving students' tolerance for the ideas of others, their attitude toward authority, and their ability to act as responsible citizens. The research design will use an applied research design using internal validity measures to provide summative evaluation conclusions. The project will use both quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze the effect of the intervention on three learning outcomes of the study. Quantitative methods will utilize a survey questionnaire and multiple-choice test administered to all students in both an experimental and control group of approximately 1,000 upper elementary and middle school students from five different urban areas of the United States. Demographic groups will be compared including males vs. females, racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groupings. In addition, a separate measure will evaluate the degree to which teachers used the strategies modeled and demonstrated them in six different teacher-training sessions by professional teacher trainers.[26]

In designing the SVPDP, the CCE decided to use the three programs it had used in the Bell Gardens project—*We the People*, *Foundations of Democracy*, and *Violence in the Schools*—as well as its *We the People... Project Citizen* (*Project Citizen*) program. The CCE plan was to integrate these into existing social studies courses in participating upper elementary and middle schools, with training workshops for participating teachers and the use of CCE "teaching strategies that focus on critical thinking, cooperative learning, group problem solving, and performance based assessment."[27]

The CCE decided to use quantitative and qualitative measures to assess the outcomes of the SVPDP.[28] With respect to quantitative measures, the first-year research design has

included the administration of civic knowledge and student attitudinal tests to students in the SVPDP classes, and also to students in a randomly selected control group of classes (in the same districts) not using the CCE materials. Teachers administered these tests both before and after the CCE curricular materials were covered in the SVPDP classes (i.e., in August–September 1999 and May–June 2000, respectively). Qualitative measures in the SVPDP research design included observations from focus groups of students in the SVPDP classes (preferably conducted after the planned *Project Citizen* culminating activity in spring 2000), as well as separate focus groups of their parents and teachers and observations of the SVPDP classes in which the CCE curricular materials were used.

Addressing the relationship between the CCE curricular materials used in the SVPDP and school violence prevention, the quantitative and qualitative components of the SVPDP research design have sought to measure levels and changes in students' understanding of civic education concepts, civic dispositions and attitudes, civic knowledge, and civic skills.

First, the SVPDP student focus groups and the tests of students' civic knowledge and attitudes were designed to measure students' understanding of the concepts incorporated into the curricula, including civic education, tolerance, and social tolerance.[29] Second, the student focus groups and attitudinal tests focused on measuring any changes in student attitudes, specifically, building a positive attitude toward authority figures, peers, government, the community, the school, and alternatives to violence as a means of dealing with conflict.[30] Third, the student tests and focus groups aimed to measure students' degree of knowledge and understanding of the following civic education content: the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, student codes of conduct, state and local laws, government, federalism, political action, early American history, and the responsibilities of citizenship.[31] Fourth, the CCE's end-of-school-year teacher questionnaire and classroom evaluations were intended to measure the success of introducing or enhancing students' and teachers' success in instituting the following in the SVPDP classrooms: cooperative group learning, group interdependence, oral and written communication, and community problem solving.[32]

Through these measures, the SVPDP has sought to demonstrate that the civic education instruction that students in the SVPDP classrooms receive will lead to positive results with respect to four key "early warning signs" of troubled youth who may become violent: "[s]ocial withdrawal, often stemming from feelings of depression and rejection"; "[f]eelings of isolation and being alone"; "[e]xcessive feelings of rejection"; and "[i]ntolerance for differences and prejudicial attitudes."[33]

A major difference between the Bell Gardens and the SVPDP research designs concerns the students on whom the research is focused. The Bell Gardens project included qualitative measures to evaluate the effect, if any, of curricular intervention on at-risk youth enrolled in classes receiving the intervention. The SVPDP, however, has not been designed specifically for students identified as at risk. Rather, the qualitative measures in the SVPDP research design have sought to evaluate the effect, if any, of curricular

intervention on changes in attitudes and perceptions of all students who participate in the program.

Finally, given that the CCE had inadequate time in summer 1999 to develop fully an SVPDP research strategy and design prior to the start of its first year of use that reflected appropriately the variations in district implementation, the CCE assumed from the start of the program in summer 1999 that it would make improvements to the SVPDP research design for the second year of the program (2000–01) based on experience gained during 1999–2000.

SVPDP Implementation Plan and Initial Implementation Process

Lou Rosen has provided overall SVPDP direction during its first year of implementation. Working with him on the development of the SVPDP research strategy and design have been CCE's evaluation consultants, Matash Esfandiari—who helped design and perform the evaluation of the Bell Gardens project—and Bill Lafitte. These evaluators also worked with Rosen on developing the common research instruments (e.g., the student attitudinal survey, the focus group questions, the teacher questionnaire) used in all SVPDP sites.

The following are brief descriptions of key steps taken by the CCE to plan and begin to implement the SVPDP, addressing SVPDP school districts; district site coordinators and site evaluators; schools, teachers, classes, and teacher training; and civic education curricular materials.

SVPDP School Districts

The development of the SVPDP implementation plan began with the CCE's selection of school districts to participate in the first year of the demonstration program. Rosen planned initially to select five urban school districts, from different areas of the country. For various reasons (e.g., strong CCE presence, inclusion of large and diverse school districts, political considerations), the CCE selected Denver, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Raleigh. Subsequently, the CCE's involvement in these sites was expanded and slightly modified. Even before the Columbine High School violence in April 1999, Jefferson County Public Schools was selected because of its proximity to Denver, its fast-growing suburban population, and its prior collaboration with the CCE on school violence prevention. New York City's size (over one million students) made working with the district as a whole very difficult, so two subdistricts—Community School District 23 in Brooklyn and Community School District 30 in Queens—were chosen. In North Carolina, the most appropriate school district in the Raleigh area to include in the SVPDP was the Wake County Public School System, which includes not only Raleigh schools but also those in adjacent, rapidly growing suburban areas.[34]

Thus, seven school districts participated in the first year (1999–2000) of the SVPDP: Los Angeles Unified School District (California); Denver Public Schools and Jefferson County Public Schools (Colorado); Community School District 30 (Queens) and Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York City (New York); Wake County

Public School System (North Carolina); and School District of Philadelphia (Pennsylvania).

Once the candidate districts were identified, Rosen and his CCE colleagues called key district administrators in these districts who already were familiar with CCE programs, who were well-positioned to provide guidance and ensure support for the implementation of the SVPDP, and who shared the CCE's belief in the importance of civic education instruction as an effective approach to school violence prevention among upper elementary and middle school students. The SVPDP district contact in each pilot site was informed that the CCE would provide support for a minimum of six SVPDP teacher training workshops during 1999–2000, free CCE curricular materials to each of the classes agreeing to participate in the program, and $10,000 per district toward the cost of supplemental supplies, including, but not limited to, videos, posters, and field trips.[35]

The CCE received overwhelmingly positive expressions of interest in SVPDP participation from district superintendents, social studies coordinators, social studies teachers, and other educators in the selected districts. The CCE requested assistance from its initial SVPDP contact in each of these districts in identifying district schools that would participate. In addition, the CCE asked that the appropriate official in each district sign and return to the CCE a memorandum of agreement specifying the terms of the SVPDP collaboration between the district and the CCE. Each of the seven districts returned this signed memorandum, although most districts made legal or other changes to the document reflecting district-specific policies and procedures relating to their students' and teachers' participation. Overall, the district contacts have played critical roles in getting the SVPDP established in their respective districts, even though, in many cases, they themselves have been involved only minimally in the implementation process.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of each of the seven first-year SVPDP districts and describes each district's context for the SVPDP implementation.

SVPDP District Site Coordinators and Site Evaluators

Rosen decided that it would be impossible for him personally to monitor and coordinate all SVPDP activity at the district sites. Whereas the Bell Gardens project by its second year (1996–97) involved only two experimental classrooms in which the CCE materials were used and two control classrooms, the SVPDP research design specified implementation in 70-80 classrooms across the country in its first year, with a similar number of control classrooms. Rosen also believed that decentralized, site-based coordination and evaluation would be less expensive and more effective than hiring additional coordinators and evaluators as CCE staff. He therefore appointed a program coordinator and a program evaluator at each site to work with him to guide the SVPDP implementation, and conduct the site's planned qualitative and quantitative research, with the cooperation and participation of the SVPDP teachers.

The CCE viewed the role of the site coordinator in each district as critical to the success of the SVPDP implementation. Generally, the CCE requested its initial contact person in each district to identify an individual whom the CCE could hold responsible for

coordinating the district's SVPDP teacher training workshops, disseminating all CCE materials, providing technical and curricula assistance to SVPDP teachers wherever and whenever needed, and developing and administering a budget to spend the $10,000 provided by the CCE for the district's participation in the SVPDP.[36]

Rosen initially decided to hire the SVPDP district site evaluators on an hourly basis, primarily to observe the participating classrooms after the teachers had been trained and were implementing the SVPDP in their classrooms. Evaluators also were to be responsible for conducting the SVPDP focus groups and writing the end-of-year (i.e., summer 2000) evaluation reports for their respective sites. Rosen sought to hire experienced (preferably local) individuals intimately familiar with their respective districts to conduct these evaluation tasks.[37] The CCE did not specify in advance, as part of its SVPDP implementation plan, what kinds of evaluations should be conducted at the sites, who should be evaluated, how they should be evaluated, and what SVPDP components should be evaluated. Rather, it chose to address these questions after it had selected all SVPDP site evaluators.

Chapter 4 addresses in detail the SVPDP implementation issues associated with site coordination and site evaluation in the seven SVPDP districts, including the selection of site coordinators and site evaluators.

SVPDP Schools, Teachers, Classes, and Teacher Training

Rosen relied on the SVPDP site coordinator (or the initial district contact person) in each district to contact school principals and request the participation of some of their teachers. Rather than require that teachers be selected based on experience, Rosen asked that these coordinators (or contacts) select those representing a broad spectrum of teaching styles and experience. If the first-year SVPDP outcomes showed the program and its curricular intervention to be effective, then the differences among participating teachers potentially could enhance the lessons learned from the first year of the program.[38]

Together with the selection of teachers and classes, the site coordinator in each SVPDP district was responsible for identifying a group of control classes having student profiles similar to those in the SVPDP classes. The site coordinator would ideally select one control class for each SVPDP (or, experimental) class, with the two paired classes having approximately the same number of students. The CCE requested that each SVPDP class and its complementary control class be located at the same school.

The CCE anticipated that the date of the first SVPDP teacher training workshop would vary from district to district. It planned, however, that each district would schedule its first workshop at or before the beginning of the school year (which in some districts was early August). The site coordinator in each district was responsible for scheduling and organizing this session, based on a sample agenda for the initial training workshop that the CCE provided to each coordinator. Rosen worked closely with each site coordinator in planning initial sessions and participated actively in these in all seven districts. He also made it clear to site coordinators that he would be pleased to attend later SVPDP teacher training workshops, if invited.

Chapter 5 addresses in greater depth the SVPDP implementation issues associated with teachers and teacher training in the seven SVPDP districts.

SVPDP Curricular Materials

The SVPVP design employed four CCE programs as its curricular intervention: *We the People*, *Project Citizen*, *Foundations of Democracy*, and *Violence in the Schools* (see table 1.1). All but the second of these programs had also been used in the Bell Gardens project.

We the People is a program supporting instruction on "the history and principles of American constitutional democracy for elementary, middle and high school students," and it includes a simulated congressional hearing as a culminating activity.[39] In the first year of the SVPDP, the CCE has offered participating teachers (and classes) the choice of using either the elementary (Level I) or intermediate (Level II) level materials, in order to accomodate the needs of each participating class and its teacher. Similarly, each SVPDP class and teacher has been able to choose between the Level I or Level II civic knowledge pretest and posttest. *We the People* materials are available in versions appropriate for grades kindergarten through grade 12.

Project Citizen specifically targets middle school students to "develop interest in public policymaking as well as the ability to participate competently and responsibly in state and local government."[40] Each class using *Project Citizen* has as its culminating activity the preparation of a portfolio proposing a researched solution to a public policy problem in the community, as well as the presentation to appropriate local leaders of the problem and the class solution.

Foundations of Democracy provides the curricular framework for teaching democratic principles and basic concepts, including privacy, authority, responsibility, and justice. This multidisciplinary program is available in versions appropriate for kindergarten through grade 12.[41]

Violence in the Schools, although included in the SVPDP materials, has not been as widely used in the first-year SVPDP districts as the other three CCE curricular programs, because the CCE intends to revise and update it. The focus of this material is on the development of violence prevention plans through student participation.[42]

Because the CCE programs used in the SVPDP are general civic education curricular materials and have not been written specifically for the SVPDP, in summer 1999 the CCE revised some terminology and definitions to better fit the SVPDP and its objectives. In addition, as the SVPDP implementation has proceeded, the CCE has made changes based on feedback from the SVPDP teachers, coordinators, evaluators, and others.

Chapter 6 expands on implementation issues associated with the CCE curricular materials used in the SVPDP, including the *We the People* and *Project Citizen* culminating activities.

SVPDP Research Design and Implementation Realities

Early in the SVPDP's first year (1999–2000), the CCE recognized that several realities in its implementation process were inconsistent with its initial research strategy and design. For the CCE, a critically important program objective increasingly became successful implementation of the program in each of the seven district sites. For example, if an SVPDP site coordinator decided that deviations from the research design were necessary to optimize the first-year program implementation and to increase the likelihood of longer-term adoption and use of the CCE curricular materials for school violence prevention in the district, the CCE generally accepted these deviations, as long as core elements of the research design remained (e.g., pretests and posttests in the SVPDP classes).

In essence, the result has been seven different 1999–2000 demonstration programs, with some common elements. Each SVPDP site has developed its own implementation process, balancing the initial CCE research design with its district-specific needs, policies, and interests. The SVPDP site coordinator and site evaluator priorities and objectives have varied across the seven district sites, as have the SVPDP teacher familiarity with and use of the CCE materials. Coordinators, evaluators, and teachers have encountered site-specific problems requiring adjustments in the general design to enable the program to continue—and such adjustments have been made, with the concurrence of the CCE. Each site's SVPDP quantitative and qualitative research results have been very important to that district in making decisions about continuing or revising the program; the validity of the totality of these research results across all SVPDP sites is questionable, however, given implementation variations among the sites.

To illustrate, the SVPDP research design called for the CCE to compare the pretest and posttest results for experimental students with those from a randomly selected control group of students in the same district who did not use the CCE curricular materials. Early in the fall of 1999, however, the CCE and its SVPDP districts identified problems with this approach. One dilemma was that most of the participating districts handpicked the teachers whose classes would be the control groups, thereby eliminating the randomness of the students selected. (The SVPDP teachers and classes were not selected randomly, either.) Other logistical and legal issues in the districts have prevented the use of a fully random research approach as well.[43] Therefore, the CCE has used nonrandomly selected test groups of students with nonrandomly selected control groups of students at each site. Other research design deviations associated with the planned use of the SVPDP and control group classes of students at district sites have included switching one class from a control group to a test group after the pretest; significantly fewer control group students than test group students in a school and district; and the difficulty of retaining control group classes in the SVPDP throughout the year.

Another problem has been that the CCE did not specify in its research design what guidance and information should be provided to the students prior to their completion of the SVPDP pretests and posttests. As a result, some teachers have given too little information, while others have provided too much guidance. This has been true for some

SVPDP classes as well as for some control group classes, lessening the validity of the comparisons within groups, as well as between groups, and compromising the research results. In at least one district, teachers providing inappropriate or no guidance to students has also contributed to student fears and concerns, further affecting the validity of the pretests and posttests.

Across the SVPDP districts, the SVPDP site coordinators' guidance to teachers regarding the importance of covering all or most of the CCE curricular materials in the program has varied. Some have simply advised teachers to cover as much as possible, while others have worked actively with teachers to encourage them to include in their SVPDP classes the material from the curricular programs recommended by the CCE. Some site coordinators have encouraged the SVPDP teachers to use one or both of the culminating activities that the CCE views as critical elements of the SVPDP; other coordinators have been far less aggressive in this regard, basically letting each teacher decide whether or not to use these activities. As a result, the CCE civics content and concepts covered by SVPDP teachers have varied among schools and classes, and this likely has affected the posttest scores of SVPDP classes.

At the same time, by the middle of the first year of the program, the SVPDP district site evaluators had experienced a significant diminution of their roles and responsibilities due to the fiscal and practical realities of SVPDP implementation. While a site-based approach to evaluation and observation had initially been viewed as fiscally prudent, the costs associated with this approach far exceeded anticipated budgets as site evaluators became actively involved in their SVPDP assessment activities. The resulting shift of the primary evaluation responsibility to the CCE in fall 1999, together with the elimination of multiple SVPDP classroom visits and the limitation of such visits to SVPDP classrooms that fully implemented the CCE curricular materials, also raises issues about the SVPDP research results.

As explained in chapter 1, the development of the SVPDP research strategy and design, as well as the timing of the development, administration, and analysis of the SVPDP pretests and posttests on student attitudes and civic knowledge, precluded involvement by the LBJ School researchers in the SVPDP. In addition, the researchers did not participate in any SVPDP district focus groups. Rather, the LBJ School project has focused on documenting and assessing the implementation process in the seven first-year SVPDP sites, as well as on steps that could be taken to improve the SVPDP implementation in the program's second year. Accordingly, the findings and recommendations in this report are not affected by the modifications in the research design that occurred as the implementation process proceeded in the seven sites. These findings and recommendations should prove valuable to the 2000–01 SVPDP participants, both in the 1999–2000 SVPDP districts that will participate again and in the districts participating for the first time in 2000–01.

As for the CCE, it has gained important information and insights about SVPDP outcomes, not only from the LBJ School project but also through its SVPDP tests, focus groups, and other measurements. These outcomes should inform the decisions of the

CCE and the 2000–01 SVPDP districts during the program's second year. As education experts have noted, "Research that is more descriptive, such as case studies, can give more of a ground-level view of classroom workings...."[44]

At the same time, the LBJ School researchers believe, based on their observations of the SVPDP implementation in all seven districts, that district-by-district variations in the 1999–2000 SVPDP research design make it difficult to draw statistically valid conclusions from the quantitative and qualitative assessments conducted by the CCE at the seven first-year SVPDP sites. Given that the number of second-year SVPDP districts is significantly larger than the number of first-year districts, it is critical that the second-year SVPDP research design be developed collaboratively with the 2000–01 SVPDP site coordinators prior to the start of the program's second year, to ensure both effective program implementation and positive student outcomes.

Chapters 3 through 8 document more comprehensively the first-year implementation of the SVPDP in each of the seven participating school districts. Observations, findings, and recommendations in these chapters are based on interviews by the LBJ School researchers with teachers, students, school district administrators, site coordinators, site evaluators, parents, and community members in the participating districts, as well as with CCE staff; on multiple site visits by the researchers to each of the seven SVPDP districts; on the researchers' observations of students in SVPDP classes and schools in all seven districts; and on participation by the researchers in SVPDP teacher training workshops in all seven districts.

Notes

[1] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program: Conducted by the Center for Civic Education" (Calabasas, California, September 1999), n.p.

[2] U.S. General Accounting Office, *School Safety: Promising Initiatives for Addressing School Violence* (Washington, D.C., April 1995), n.p.

[3] Email correspondence on "CCE School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program" from Daniel Linz, Professor, University of California at Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, California, to Lou Rosen, John Hale, Chuck Quigley, and Suzanne Soule, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, June 10, 1999.

[4] Lawrence W. Sherman et al., "Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising," in *National Institute of Justice: Research in Brief*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice (Washington, D.C., July 1998), p. 1.

[5] Russell J. Skiba and Reece L. Peterson, "School Discipline at a Crossroads: From Zero Tolerance to Early Response," *Exceptional Children,* vol. 66, no. 3 (Spring 2000), p. 335.

[6] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97*, NCES Report 98-030, by S. Heaviside, C. Rowand, C. Williams, and E. Farris (Washington, D.C., 1998), as cited in Russell J. Skiba and Reece L. Peterson, "School Discipline at a Crossroads: From Zero Tolerance to Early Response," *Exceptional Children,* vol. 66, no. 3 (Spring 2000), p. 336.

[7] G.J. Peterson et al., "An Examination of Violence in Three Rural School Districts," *Rural Education*, vol. 19, no. 3 (1996), pp. 25-32, as cited in Russell J. Skiba and Reece L. Peterson, "School Discipline at a Crossroads: From Zero Tolerance to Early Response," *Exceptional Children,* vol. 66, no. 3 (Spring 2000), p. 336.

[8] Skiba and Peterson, p. 336.

[9] Daniel Lockwood, "Violence Among Middle School and High School Students: Analysis and Implications for Prevention," in *National Institute of Justice: Research in Brief*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice (Washington, D.C., October 1997), p. 1.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Skiba and Peterson, p. 336.

[12] Daniel Lockwood, p. 6.

[13] Skiba and Peterson, p. 336.

[14] U.S. General Accounting Office, *School Safety: Promising Initiatives for Addressing School Violence.*

[15] Email correspondence from Daniel Linz to Lou Rosen, John Hale, Chuck Quigley, and Suzanne Soule, Center for Civic Education.

[16] Center for Civic Education, "Civics Study Spurs National Campaign to Promote Civic Education," *Center Correspondent*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Winter 2000), p. 2.

[17] Center for Civic Education and Constitutional Rights Foundation, "Research and Development Project: Los Angeles, California" (draft) (Los Angeles, California, 1996), p. 2.

[18] Ibid., p. 1.

[19] Center for Civic Education and Constitutional Rights Foundation, "Executive Summary of Assessment of Citizenship/Law-Related Education on Violent and Antisocial Behavior: Year Two Evaluation" (draft) (Los Angeles, California, 1997), p. 1.

[20] Ibid., p. 2. [The description of the research design of the Bell Gardens project is found here.]

[21] Ibid., p. 5.

[22] Ibid., p. 11.

[23] Ibid., p. 12.

[24] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program" (Calabasas, California, October 1999), n.p.

[25] Memorandum on "Re: Student Survey Questions" from Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director for Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, to SVPDP Site Evaluators, August 23, 1999.

[26] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program: Conducted by the Center for Civic Education," n.p.

[27] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program," n.p.

[28] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Angela Hernandez with Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director for Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, October 14, 1999.

[29] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program: Conducted by the Center for Civic Education," n.p.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Center for Civic Education, "School Violence Demonstration Program Moves Ahead," *Center Correspondent*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Winter 2000), p. 3.

[34] Memorandum regarding Status of CCE School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program from Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director for Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, to Chuck Quigley, John Hale, Suzanne Soule, Elaine Craig, Ken Rodriguez, Matash Esfandiari, Ken Tolo, and Dan Linz, June 7, 1999.

[35] Rosen interview.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Angela Hernandez with Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director for Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, and with Bill LaFitte, Evaluation Consultant, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, October 15, 1999.

[39] Center for Civic Education, "History, Mission and Programs of the Center for Civic Education," Handout (Calabasas, California, May 1999), n.p.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Rosen interview.

[44] Debra Viadero, "Definition of 'Research' Raises Concerns," *Education Week* (May 24, 2000). Online. Available: http://www.edweek.org/eq/ewstory.cfm?slug=37oeri.h19. Accessed: May 25, 2000.

The SVPDP in Action: Community School District 23 (Brooklyn)

SVPDP Students Engage in Participatory Democracy in the Classroom

In I.S. 284K, Lou Wallace School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), the researchers observed an SVPDP eighth-grade social studies class experience participatory democracy firsthand by conducting mini-political campaigns. The class divided into groups, each of which was responsible for promoting the candidacy of one student from the group for mayor of the fictional city of Jeffersonville. The students gave speeches, endorsed candidates, created platforms, and conducted an election. Even the more hesitant and reserved students assumed contributing roles in this exercise.

This SVPDP lesson provided a particularly meaningful learning opportunity for one of these student groups. The students in this group engaged in a heated discussion regarding the characteristics that an individual needs to be a good mayor. As they read the descriptions of the different individuals running for mayor, a student noted that one candidate was very popular, which would make him a better candidate. A classmate disagreed, stating that "popularity is not a leadership quality." A lengthy discussion followed, and each member of the group shared his or her opinion on the role of popularity in government. Ultimately, a consensus emerged that while popularity might help to get a candidate elected, it was not a characteristic they should look for in a potential mayor. This kind of dialogue is typical of the conversations the Community School District 23 (Brooklyn) students had during their classroom exercises related to the SVPDP materials. For the students in this class, the issues associated with the Jeffersonville mayoral election became as real to them as the challenging issues they face everyday in their school and community.

Chapter 3. School Districts Participating in the First-Year Implementation of the SVPDP: An Overview

By late summer 1999, the CCE had developed a research strategy and design for the SVPDP, as well as a common first-year implementation plan for the participating school districts. The actual 1999–2000 SVPDP implementation varied among the pilot sites, however, reflecting each district's specific educational needs and circumstances.

This variation is not surprising, given that the seven predominantly urban and suburban districts the CCE chose as first-year sites are quite diverse with respect to such characteristics as the size of the district, the ethnicity of the student population, the school district operating budget, the teacher/student ratio, and the political atmosphere. The characteristics of the seven SVPDP districts—Denver Public Schools (Denver), Jefferson County Public Schools (Jefferson County), Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) (Los Angeles), School District of Philadelphia (Philadelphia), Wake County Public School System (Wake County), and two New York City districts, namely, Community School District 23 (CSD 23) in Brooklyn and Community School District 30 (CSD 30) in Queens—help to explain their different approaches. Moreover, factors such as the processes by which the districts became SVPDP sites, delays in the arrival of SVPDP curricular materials in some districts, positions and personalities of key SVPDP district participants, and community events beyond the control of district program participants contributed to the SVPDP heterogeneity in the seven sites.

This chapter introduces the seven districts that participated in the SVPDP's first year. Whereas chapters 4 through 8 examine in detail key program elements and factors shaping enactment of the SVPDP in these districts, this chapter briefly describes each district's context for implementation. It summarizes key data about the SVPDP districts, identifies individuals in each district involved in the program, and highlights particular characteristics and events that have shaped the SVPDP in each district.

Table 3.1 shows selected data about the seven first-year SVPDP districts, while table 3.2 illustrates the ethnic makeup of the districts' entire student populations.[1]

Table 3.1
Selected Data on First-Year SVPDP Districts

District	Number of Schools and Centers	Number of Teachers Employed	District Enrollment	District Operating Budget (millions)	Spending Per Pupil
CSD 23 (Brooklyn)	17	775	13,224	N/A	N/A
New York City	*1,145*	*75,209*	*1,093,071*	*$9,700*	*$8,330*
Denver	120	4,680	68,893	$393	$5,702
Jefferson County	144	N/A	89,000	$434	$4,899
Los Angeles	930	36,170	913,119	$7,454	$8,163
Philadelphia	240	10,595	192,284	$1,436	$6,720
CSD 30 (Queens)	28	1,686	27,112	N/A	N/A
New York City	*1,145*	*75,209*	*1,093,071*	*$9,700*	*$8,330*
Wake County	115	5,950	94,850	$599	$6,318

Source: Web sites of 1999–2000 SVPDP districts; see endnote 1 for chapter 3 of this report.

Table 3.2
Ethnicity of Student Populations in First-Year SVPDP Districts

	Percentage of District Enrollment					
District	White	Hispanic	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Native American	Other
CSD 23 (Brooklyn)	0.4	15.0	83.1	N/A	N/A	1.1
New York City	*15.5*	*37.7*	*35.7*	*10.8*	*N/A*	*0.3*
Denver	23.4	51.1	20.8	3.4	1.3	N/A
Jefferson County	84.6	10.3	1.3	3.1	0.8	N/A
Los Angeles	10.5	69.1	13.6	6.6	0.3	N/A
Philadelphia	20.0	11.0	64.0	5.0	N/A	N/A
CSD 30 (Queens)	15.6	50.1	13.2	21.1	N/A	N/A
New York City	*15.5*	*37.7*	*35.7*	*10.8*	*N/A*	*0.3*
Wake County	64.0	N/A	27.0	N/A	N/A	9.0

Source: Web sites of 1999–2000 SVPDP districts; see endnote 1 for chapter 3 of this report.

Note: Percentages for a district may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Community School District 23 (Brooklyn)

During the 1999–2000 school year, the SVPDP was introduced into four schools in Community School District 23 (CSD 23) in Brooklyn: I.S. 55K, Oceanhill-Brownsville Secondary School; I.S. 275K, Thelma J. Hamilton School; I.S. 284K, Lou Wallace School; and I.S. 298K, Dr. Betty Shabazz School. One of ten New York City school districts located in Brooklyn, CSD 23 served 13,224 students in 1998-99, and these students attended 17 schools. That year, the district's students were 83.1 percent African American, 15.0 percent Hispanic, 0.4 percent White, and 1.1 percent other ethnicities. Eighty-eight percent of the CSD 23 students received free or reduced-price lunches, and five percent of its students were limited English proficiency (LEP) students.[2]

The SVPDP site coordinator for CSD 23, Nicole Williams, collaborated closely with the SVPDP district contact for CSD 23, Rebecca Skinner, throughout the program's first year. Both began working in early 1999 to bring the SVPDP to Brooklyn, meeting with principals in the district to generate interest and to identify participating schools. Williams felt it was important to seek participation from schools that traditionally have been "overlooked" in supplemental programs such as the SVPDP. Once Skinner and Williams gained the support of the principals of the four CSD 23 schools, they assisted them in selecting seventh- and eighth-grade social studies teachers to participate in the SVPDP. The first SVPDP teacher training for CSD 23, which occurred in June 1999, set the stage for the program's implementation, and offered participants an opportunity to discuss pilot program expectations and responsibilities.

Two CSD 23 SVPDP teachers and the district social studies coordinator formed a task force in September 1999 to align the SVPDP (i.e., the CCE) curricular materials and lessons with New York State and New York City standards for social studies coursework. The group worked after school to plan 16 lessons encompassing five social studies units, and provided a framework to assist teachers in creating lesson plans incorporating the SVPDP materials while meeting the district's other requirements.

The CSD 23 SVPDP teachers decided for themselves how best to use the SVPDP materials, and began using the materials at different times during the year. For example, at a November 20, 1999, teacher training workshop, one CSD 23 teacher stated that she had completed the first seven lessons in *Foundations in Democracy*, while another was using various chapters in the CCE texts to enhance the district textbooks. Some SVPDP teachers have used CCE texts for reading, in addition to social studies, lessons. Many teachers have opted to use CCE texts developed for elementary students (Level I) rather than the higher-level texts recommended by the CCE for the SVPDP (Level II), because the Level I materials are easier for their SVPDP students to read and to comprehend. Most of the first-year SVPDP teachers have used the SVPDP culminating activities.

The first-year implementation of the SVPDP in CSD 23 (Brooklyn) thus has followed in most respects the plan outlined by the CCE. The work of the CSD 23 curricular alignment task force has helped integrate CCE materials into teachers' lessons, and helped give teachers confidence that they could both participate in the SVPDP and meet state and city social studies guidelines. The CSD 23 SVPDP teachers have been able to rely on their SVPDP site coordinator and district contact for support, assistance, and motivation.

Denver Public Schools

The Denver Public Schools (Denver) district serves the entire city of Denver, as well as some small peripheral areas and those out-of-district students who choose to attend schools in the Denver district. The Denver district enrolls 68,893 students in 81 elementary schools (grades K-5), 18 middle schools (grades 6-8), and 12 high schools (grades 9-12). In addition, it has nine alternative schools. Of all the district's students, 35,422 receive lunches daily; of these, 24,568 receive a free lunch and 3,765 receive a

reduced-price lunch—meaning that 80 percent of the students who eat school lunches are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch. Also, 14,660 Denver students—21 percent of the district's student population—have acquired English as a second language. Of these, 13,070 have Spanish as their first language, and the remaining 1,590 speak as their first language one of 80 other non-English languages. Denver students have an average score of 19.7 on the American College Test (ACT), which is lower than both the Colorado and the national average scores of 21.6 and 21.0, respectively.[3]

Six of the 18 Denver middle schools—Baker, Cole, Henry, Horace Mann, Skinner, and Smiley—have had teachers who participated in the first-year implementation of the SVPDP. Included in the SVPDP classes are sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The diversity of these six schools, as well as that of other schools in the district, may be illustrated by brief descriptions of the two Denver SVPDP schools visited by the LBJ School researchers during 1999–2000: Horace Mann Middle School and Henry Middle School. Horace Mann is located in the northwestern part of the City of Denver, adjacent to the largest low-income housing project in the city.[4] During the 1998-99 school year, 90.1 percent of the school's 646 students were Hispanic, 7.3 percent were White, 1.4 percent were African American, 0.8 percent were Asian, and 0.5 percent were Native American. In addition, 88.4 percent of Horace Mann students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 38.4 percent were learning English. Horace Mann Middle School spent an average of $3,942 per student for the school year, which was similar to the overall district middle school average expenditure of $3,830.[5] The school's neighborhood has a reputation for gang activity, and many students live in households where there is only one parent, who must work, or those in which both parents must work to make ends meet.[6] The teachers at Horace Mann have difficulty involving parents in their classrooms.[7] Also noteworthy is the high teacher turnover rate at Horace Mann: approximately 50 percent of its teachers leave the school each year, mostly for positions at other district schools.[8]

By contrast, Henry Middle School is located in the southwestern corner of Denver, in an area that is considered economically middle class. Many of the families in that area are two-parent families, with only one working parent, and many students attending Henry have parents who work for the city in some capacity.[9] During the 1998-99 school year, 49.8 percent of the 936 students who attended Henry were White, 40.1 percent were Hispanic, 6.3 percent were Asian, 2.1 percent were African American, and 1.7 percent were Native American. In addition, 36.3 percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches. Only 3.7 percent of the students were learning English. Henry Middle School spent an average of $3,502 per student for the school year, which was slightly lower than the overall district average of $3,830.[10] From a teacher's point of view, the school provides a very desirable instructional environment: last year, for example, no teacher left Henry for another teaching position.[11] Parents also view the school and its administration favorably, and there is a high level of parent involvement.[12] Horace Mann Middle School and Henry Middle School, therefore, face very different circumstances in educating students and implementing the SVPDP.

In 1999, the CCE selected Loyal Darr, currently a faculty member at the University of Denver and formerly a Denver Public Schools social studies teacher who began his teaching career at Horace Mann Middle School, as the Denver SVPDP site coordinator. Darr has worked with the *We the People* program at the high school level in Denver as the program's congressional district coordinator for many years, so he is familiar with the CCE and has known Lou Rosen well for many years.[13] The Denver SVPDP teachers were selected based upon Darr's personal knowledge of their strong teaching ability and their willingness to implement the program. SVPDP implementation in Denver has generally followed the CCE's plan. For example, all SVPDP teachers have completed the *We the People* and the *Project Citizen* curricular materials and held the associated culminating activities. The only deviation from this has been that the Horace Mann SVPDP class did not hold its culminating activity with SVPDP classes at other schools, but instead held it in its home classroom. The teacher of this class made this decision because the high student turnover rate in the class made it difficult for all of the students to master the material.[14]

The success of the SVPDP implementation in the Denver Public Schools has been due in large measure both to the work of the SVPDP teachers and to that of Darr and Neil Deason, the district social studies coordinator. Darr's knowledge of the district's operation and his experience with the *We the People* program have been critically important in ensuring program participation. Denver SVPDP participants have also praised him for his optimism and commitment to the success of the program. Deason has played a crucial role in ensuring the availability of resources necessary for successful program implementation and support for the SVPDP throughout the district.

Jefferson County Public Schools

Covering almost 780 square miles, the Jefferson County Public Schools (Jefferson County) district serves the entire county with 92 elementary schools, 18 middle schools, 16 high schools, 10 charter schools, and 8 special-facility schools. These 144 schools enrolled approximately 89,000 students during the 1998–99 school year.[15] Of these, 84.6 percent were White, 10.3 percent were Hispanic, 1.3 percent were African American, 3.1 percent were Asian, and 0.8 percent were Native American.[16] The operating budget for the district's 1998–99 school year was $434 million.[17] Jefferson County is a predominantly suburban part of the metropolitan Denver area. The eastern part of the county, closest to Denver, has higher numbers of poor, minority, and non-English speaking students than does the rest of the county, which is predominantly middle class.[18]

Brian Loney, project coordinator for Jefferson County's social studies curriculum resource staff and also the SVPDP site coordinator, first heard about the SVPDP from Barbara Miller, the CCE's state representative for Colorado. Loney has a history of active involvement with the CCE and other civic education programs and is an enthusiastic supporter of the CCE. When Loney learned that the Denver Public Schools planned to participate as a first-year pilot site for the SVPDP, he called Rosen to propose that Jefferson County also be included. Rosen agreed to Loney's request that the CCE allow Jefferson County to participate on its own terms and to permit it to fit SVPDP

curricular materials into the district's regular curriculum.[19] Loney then introduced the program to the district's deputy superintendent, Cindy Stevenson, whose valuable help aided the program's implementation by encouraging district school officials and teachers to participate.[20]

Fifteen county schools participated in the SVPDP in its first year. Fourteen of these are traditional K-6 elementary schools, and one serves only grades 4-6. Unlike the other six first-year sites, in which SVPDP curricular materials have been taught to middle school students, all 18 Jefferson County SVPDP participants have been fifth- and sixth-grade teachers. These upper elementary grades were chosen because their curriculum fit that of the SVPDP. In Jefferson County, fifth graders study American History through the colonial and revolutionary periods, while the sixth-grade students' American history curriculum includes the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights; this has enabled the district to integrate the SVPDP materials directly into existing class lessons and programs. In addition, Jefferson County has used some of its SVPDP grant to train teachers at the K-3 and eighth-grade levels to prepare for the program's expansion during the 2000–01 school year. The district intends to introduce the CCE materials, as well as materials from other civic education and service learning initiatives, throughout the district's K-12 social studies curricula. The young age of the Jefferson County SVPDP student participants has, however, prompted one major change in the program implementation plan designed by the CCE. Specifically, Loney believes that elementary school students are too young for the SVPDP culminating activity competitions, and so he does not encourage participating teachers to use those competitions as a way of teaching citizenship.[21]

In selecting Jefferson County's first-year SVPDP teachers, the district's social studies team chose those with strong teaching skills and enthusiasm for civic education. Most of the SVPDP teachers have more than five years of experience, and many have more than ten. Because district officials are not allowed to approach teachers directly about participation in supplemental school and curricular projects, all SVPDP requests have been submitted through the teachers' principals, who often have not wanted to approve teacher participation in programs that take them out of the classrooms for training or other activities. In Jefferson County, teacher recruitment was helped not only by Stevenson's SVPDP advocacy and support but also by the April 1999 shootings at Columbine High School, which made some teachers and principals more willing to participate in the program. The district's social studies team and the SVPDP teachers view social studies as vital in preventing school violence. They believe that the SVPDP can strengthen students' resiliency in dealing with situations that trigger violence and help create and sustain a stronger and more cohesive school community, thus making students less prone to antisocial behavior.[22]

Therefore, although the Jefferson County implementation of the SVPDP has deviated from the original CCE plan to target seventh and eighth graders, its first year has been successful and district support for the program has been strong. Because the memory of the Columbine tragedy is still vivid, the district's commitment to fulfill the SVPDP's goals of violence prevention is pervasive.

Los Angeles Unified School District

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) (Los Angeles) serves an area of 708 square miles and has the second largest student population in the country. In 1998-99, the district had 913,119 students, 36,170 teachers, and 930 schools. The LAUSD has become a major port of entry for immigrants in recent years, and Los Angeles schools reflect the ethnic diversity of the city. In 1998-99, the ethnic breakdown of its student population was 69.1 percent Hispanic, 13.6 percent African American, 10.5 percent White, 6.6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.3 Native American. In a district in which over 80 languages are spoken in the schools, 45 percent of the LAUSD students are limited English proficiency students.[23] In 1994, the LAUSD became a decentralized system when it was separated into 27 community clusters, each containing one or more high school complexes. A complex is a senior high school, plus the feeder schools, i.e., the elementary and middle schools, from which the high schools receive the most students.

Eighth-grade classes in two LAUSD middle schools participated in the first year of the SVPDP implementation. William Mulholland Middle School in Van Nuys is part of the Grant/Van Nuys cluster. With sixth through eighth graders, Mulholland had a total enrollment of 1,516 students during the 1998–1999 school year, approximately equal to the school's capacity of 1,513 students. The Mulholland students share 64 classrooms.[24] Sun Valley Middle School is part of the Polytechnic/North Hollywood cluster. Sun Valley also educates sixth through eighth graders. Its total enrollment during the 1998–1999 school year was 2,667, somewhat below its capacity of 3,083. The Sun Valley students share 82 classrooms.[25]

Because the LAUSD community clusters are empowered to create their own policies regarding school administration and educational goals, Mulholland and Sun Valley have different school schedules. Mulholland uses a traditional August–May school year, while Sun Valley uses a multi-track, year-round schedule. Students and faculty throughout the Polytechnic/North Hollywood cluster, in which Sun Valley is included, are assigned to one of three tracks, and their instruction days are staggered. At any given time during the year, only two of the three student tracks are in classes. Students in each track attend school for four months, then are on vacation for two months. The student attendance schedules keep rotating in this way until all students complete the minimum number of school attendance days required by California and are promoted to the next grade. This type of scheduling has impeded the implementation of the SVPDP, because the Sun Valley SVPDP teachers are not all able to complete the lessons according to the schedule recommended by the CCE. This multi-track school schedule also impedes efforts by the Sun Valley SVPDP teachers to collaborate with each other and with the SVPDP teachers at Mulholland on the integration of the SVPDP lessons into the regular curriculum.

In addition, events within the Los Angeles community have inhibited the SVPDP implementation process. During the first part of the 1999–2000 school year, for example, strife between the LAUSD superintendent and LAUSD board members affected the morale of the teachers in the district. This school year also has seen several appointments

to the position of superintendent. This has created problems for school administrators and teachers who wish to introduce a new program such as the SVPDP, because district policies have been in a state of flux. Further, corruption within the Los Angeles Police Department has caused the SVPDP teachers to lose credibility when they teach their students about respect and authority. The students become confused and do not believe their teachers when they encourage them to respect the very officers who are breaking the laws and performing illegal actions.[26] These complications have prevented a smooth implementation of the SVPDP in Los Angeles, but such factors cannot be controlled by the CCE or by any local SVPDP participants.

The Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator, Elaine Craig Segal, has supported the SVPDP teachers through these and other challenges. She has been responsible for organizing the teacher training workshops and providing the SVPDP teacher participants with technical assistance. Craig Segal had worked with the CCE for 13 years as its director of research and evaluation and, during her last two years, as director of the CCE's *We the People* program. Because of this experience, she was asked by Rosen to coordinate the first-year SVPDP implementation in Los Angeles. After agreeing to be the site coordinator, she contacted a colleague in the LAUSD and, with Rosen's assistance, chose Mulholland Middle School and Sun Valley Middle School as the first-year pilot sites. Craig Segal has been a valuable asset to the SVPDP teachers in Los Angeles; at the same time, since she is not employed in any capacity by the school district, her knowledge of school policies, district curricula, and teachers' instructional environments has been somewhat limited.[27]

School District of Philadelphia

The School District of Philadelphia is the largest district in Pennsylvania, with 192,284 students, 10,595 fulltime teachers, 240 schools, and a $1.436 billion budget in 1998–99. In 1996, the school board redrew the school district map and split the eight regional administrative offices into 22 cluster offices. Each cluster, or "neighborhood," contains at least one large high school, as well as the elementary and middle schools that feed into it. Students from over 70 countries attend the Philadelphia public schools, and more than one in every six public school students is from a family whose first language is not English. The racial composition of the district's students in 1997-98 was 64 percent African American, 20 percent White, 11 percent Hispanic, and 5 percent Asian/Pacific Islander. Forty-two percent of Philadelphia's school-age children live in deep poverty, and 80 percent of them qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.[28]

The CCE selected Melvin Garrison, social studies coordinator for the School District of Philadelphia, to serve as the SVPDP district contact due to his extensive experience in teaching and educational administration, as well as his familiarity with the CCE curricular materials. Garrison handles any SVPDP issue relating to the school district, particularly with respect to district curricula. The Philadelphia SVPDP site coordinator, Roberta West, is the link to the political and professional leaders in the Philadelphia area. Because she works with the Law, Education, & Participation (LEAP) program at the Temple University School of Law, she is well known among Philadelphians involved in

civic and law-related education.[29] West also has had experience with the CCE programs other than through the SVPDP.

In selecting the first-year SVPDP schools, Garrison chose schools that normally do not have the opportunity to participate in externally sponsored programs, schools that often have financial constraints making it difficult for them to be part of programs like the SVPDP. Thus, many wealthier schools that applied were not included as first-year SVPDP schools. During the early planning stage, Garrison approached the school cluster leaders and then visited principals, some of whom suggested teachers as possible SVPDP participants. His favorable reputation in the district encouraged principals to support their teachers' participation in the pilot program.[30] Philadelphia's seven first-year SVPDP schools are distributed throughout the entire city. Their participating teachers have implemented the SVPDP in 20 American history, social studies, and guidance classes—all eighth-grade classes, with the exception of one seventh-grade class.[31]

Another key element in ensuring the active support of principals and teachers in Philadelphia's SVPDP schools has been Garrison's enthusiastic belief in the ease with which SVPDP curricular materials can be integrated with the district's social studies requirements. During the first year of the SVPDP, the School District of Philadelphia also has been reforming its K-12 curricular requirements. Starting with the 1999–2000 school year, students in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades must complete exit projects. The *We the People* and *Project Citizen* culminating activities easily meet this requirement, enabling the SVPDP to fit well into the regular eighth-grade social studies curriculum. The SVPDP fosters the use of project-based learning and gives students a firm foundation in government and history, something that, according to Garrison, students often lack by the time they reach grade 11.[32]

Community School District 30 (Queens)

During its first year, the SVPDP was implemented in the New York City borough of Queens as well as in the borough of Brooklyn. In Queens, the SVPDP district has been Community School District 30 (CSD 30), whose sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade classes have participated in the program. In 1998–99, CSD 30 had 28 schools, 1,686 teachers, and 27,112 students. That year, the district's students were 50.1 percent Hispanic, 21.1 percent Asian, 15.6 percent White, and 13.2 percent African American. In addition, 78 percent of the CSD 30 students received free or reduced-price lunches, and 24 percent of its students were limited English proficiency students. This profile of the students in CSD 30 is significantly different from that of CSD 23 students (see table 1.2).[33] During 1999–2000, the LBJ School researchers visited three of the CSD 30 SVPDP schools: I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School; I.S. 154Q, Joseph Pulitzer School; and I.S. 235Q, Academy for New Americans.

A unique feature of CSD 30 (and of other districts in Queens) is its high concentration of new immigrants; this is the fastest-growing student population in the New York City school system, representing about one-half of its overall growth.[34] Thus, implementation of the SVPDP materials in CSD 30 (and Queens) provides these new immigrants with a

unique and valuable opportunity to learn about the American democratic system as well as its civic life. Indeed, since the goal of the SVPDP is to teach students about tolerance and acceptance of the diversity that exists in America, the SVPDP students in CSD 30 are a perfect audience.

The SVPDP implementation process in CSD 30 generally has followed the plan outlined by the CCE. This school district was selected as an SVPDP pilot site upon the recommendation of Debra Lesser, the CSD 30 (Queens) SVPDP site coordinator. Rosen called Lesser and asked her to participate in carrying out the SVPDP because of her familiarity with CCE programs and curricular materials. For example, Lesser, who is the executive director of the Justice Resource Center in New York City, administers the CCE's *We the People* competition for the entire city.[35] She agreed with great enthusiasm to become the site coordinator for the Queens SVPDP and has shown exceptional dedication to it.

The CCE gave Lesser complete discretion in recommending a New York City pilot site for the SVPDP's first year. She used this opportunity to choose a district in which there were new teachers with whom she had not previously worked. CSD 30 in Queens fit this description. Furthermore, CSD 30 has had a history of good management and no financial crises. The initial support from the CSD 30 superintendent and his staff also helped Lesser decide that this district would be an excellent first-year site. One assistant superintendent, in particular, was especially helpful; due to his approval and assistance, many CSD 30 school principals and teachers decided to participate in the SVPDP.[36]

In its original SVPDP implementation plan, the CCE had envisioned that one responsibility of each of the SVPDP site coordinators would be to contact school principals and teachers and request their participation in the SVPDP. In CSD 30, however, the assistant superintendent sent an email announcement about the SVPDP opportunity to various principals in the district, promising participating teachers such benefits as free civic education texts, stipends for their participation in teacher training workshops, and a possible trip to California for an SVPDP conference.[37] This email announcement was distributed to teachers either directly or through other school staff. Of the CSD 30 SVPDP teachers, some were asked to participate by their principals, some learned about the program from an assistant principal and expressed interest in participating, and others received the original email from the assistant superintendent and they themselves made the decision to participate.

In the SVPDP teacher training workshops at each pilot site, the teachers received suggestions on how to integrate CCE materials into the current district curriculum. In CSD 30, however, the district's social studies texts were more than ten years old.[38] This situation made it very difficult for the teachers to combine use of the outdated district texts with SVPDP curricular materials. It also created conflict in the classroom between district texts and the SVPDP materials.

On the whole, the first-year introduction of the SVPDP in CSD 30 was exciting and successful, even though the implementation process did not always follow recommendations made by the CCE at the start of the year. For example, teachers often

had difficulty entirely covering the SVPDP curricular materials. In response to teachers' concerns about how long it took them to complete the SVPDP lessons, Lesser encouraged teachers to do their best and take it "step by step."[39] The emphasis in CSD 30 was on implementing the SVPDP, even if this meant that the CCE plan was not fully achieved.

Wake County Public School System

Covering an area of 864 square miles, the Wake County Public School System (Wake County) is the second largest district in North Carolina, with approximately 94,850 students and 5,950 teachers in 115 schools. In the 1998–99 school year, 64 percent of the students were White, 27 percent were African American, and 9 percent were members of other racial and ethnic minorities. The operating budget for the district was $599 million.[40] The Wake County schools participating in the first year of the SVPDP primarily have been located in suburban areas, with no SVPDP schools in downtown Raleigh. Pam Van Dyk, the Wake County SVPDP site evaluator, calls some of the district schools that are close to rural areas "metropolitan/suburban," with an emphasis on suburban.[41] One SVPDP school is a year-round school. Participating students were seventh and eighth graders.

In early 1999, the CCE's Lou Rosen asked Pam Riley, the executive director of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence in Raleigh, for suggestions on how the CCE might design and run a federally funded demonstration program to examine school violence.[42] Riley's long experience with the CCE, including her service as its state representative for North Carolina and her nationally recognized expertise on school violence prevention, was among the reasons that Wake County was selected as one of the first-year SVPDP pilot sites. Wake County was also selected because Riley had known and worked closely for many years with Nancy Cope, the Wake County district social studies coordinator.[43]

Riley recommended that Carleen Wray, assistant director of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence, be designated as the Wake County SVPDP site coordinator. Riley also asked Pam Van Dyk, an independent evaluator who had worked with the Center in the past, to assume the responsibilities of the SVPDP site evaluator.

Given her position with the district, Cope, rather than Wray, invited Wake County middle school teachers to volunteer to participate in the SVPDP. She did not choose them individually. She sent a letter to all social studies teachers in May 1999 describing the SVPDP and asking those interested to respond. Ten teachers initially signed up to participate in the first year of the SVPDP.[44]

The first-year SVPDP implementation in Wake County generally followed the CCE's original plan, although not all SVPDP teachers completed all SVPDP curricular materials and culminating activities. Some challenges emerged because the SVPDP site coordinator was not an employee of the Wake County district. In addition, the district has stringent policies in place to protect students and teachers from being inundated with requests from researchers associated with the many local universities and other organizations wanting to observe classes, interview school principals and teachers, and

conduct research activities with the potential to disrupt the schools' instructional activities. Early in the school year, these policies substantially limited access by the LBJ School researchers and other SVPDP participants to classrooms, teachers, and students; later in the year, however, this situation improved. In summary, the Wake County SVPDP implementation was generally successful, due to the dedication of the Wake County SVPDP teachers and other district SVPDP participants.

Conclusions

As the SVPDP implementation processes in the seven district sites progressed during the fall of 1999, the CCE realized that it needed to give the SVPDP site coordinators and teachers enough flexibility to adapt the original SVPDP plan to the participating districts' needs and interests. Because the sites were diverse and a variety of challenges arose, including some that the CCE had not considered in designing its program plan, the CCE increasingly supported district-by-district implementation variations recommended by the site coordinators. The CCE maintained its emphasis on assessing program outcomes, but it also agreed to district-level variations that would increase the program's likelihood of being integrated successfully into district social studies curricula.

One implementation problem not anticipated by the CCE has been the strong pressure experienced by teachers in some SVPDP districts to improve their students' scores on standardized state assessments. This has produced considerable teacher anxiety in these districts about having time both to teach the district's (and the state's) required curriculum and to implement the SVPDP curricular materials. In such instances, the CCE has responded to the SVPDP teachers' and site coordinators' concerns about time constraints by allowing teachers, for example, to limit the culminating activities if this were the only way these activities could be conducted. At the same time, the CCE has consistently encouraged the teachers to involve their students in some form of public presentation that demonstrates their knowledge of civics and the SVPDP materials.

Chapters 4 through 8 examine in detail key elements of the first-year SVPDP program in the seven pilot district sites, as well as the factors shaping its implementation. Each of these chapters includes recommendations intended to improve the SVPDP in future years.

Notes

[1] The following sources were used in the creation of table 3.1 and table 3.2: New York City Board of Education, *Annual School Report: School Year 1998-1999*. Online. Available: http://www.nycenet.edu/daa/asr/content. Accessed: June 24, 2000; New York City Board of Education, New York, New York. Online. Available: http://www.nycenet.edu/news/facts99/default.htm. Accessed: May 17, 2000; Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado. Online. Available: http://www.denver.k12.co.us/districtinfo/Facts_and_Figures.html. Accessed: May 18, 2000; Colorado Department of Education, *Colorado School and District Statistics: Denver County District 1*. Online. Available: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedistrict/diststats.htm. Accessed: June 24, 2000; Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado. Online. Available: http://jeffconet.jeffco.k12.co.us/communications/welcome/indexset.html. Accessed: May 19, 2000; Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California. Online. Available: http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd.offices/Office_of_Communications/99-00-fingertip.html. Accessed: June 25, 2000; California Department of Education, *Dataquest*. Online. Available: http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest. Accessed: June 24, 2000; Greater Philadelphia First (GPF) Partnership for Reform, *A Citizen's Guide to the Philadelphia School Budget*. Online. Available: http://www.gpfirst.com/Budget-Guide/2.html. Accessed: June 24, 2000; Pennsylvania Department of Education, *Data File Documentation: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment—School and District Profiles*. Online. Available: http://www.paprofiles.org/pa9899/datafiles/datafiles.htm; Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina. Online. Available: http://www.wcpss.net/resource_guide/resource_guide.pdf. Accessed: May 19, 2000.

[2] New York City Board of Education, *Annual School Report: School Year 1998-1999*. Online.

[3] Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado. Online.

[4] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[5] Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado. Online. Available: http://www.denver.k12.co.us/schools/e/Middle/411.shtml. Accessed: May 23, 2000.

[6] SVPDP Teacher interview, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[7] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Francis Frain, President, Sunnyside Neighborhood Association, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[8] SVPDP Teacher interview, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[9] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Parents of SVPDP Students, Bear Valley Neighborhood Association, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[10] Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado. Online. Available: http://www.denver.k12.co.us/schools/e/Middle/418.shtml. Accessed: May 23, 2000.

[11] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 2, 1999.

[12] Parents interview.

[13] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Loyal Darr, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[14] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[15] Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado. Online.

[16] Jefferson County Public Schools, Department of Student Data Services, *1998-1999 Enrollment Data* (Golden, Colorado, n.d.), n.p.

[17] Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado. Online.

[18] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Brian Loney, Project Coordinator for the Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff and SVPDP Site Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Arna Caplan, Elementary School Curriculum Writer—Intermediate, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Cindy Stout, Middle School Curriculum Writer, Jefferson County Public Schools; at Jefferson County Public Schools District Office, Golden, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Interview by Susan Vermeer with Cindy Stevenson, Deputy Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, March 1, 2000; and interview by Susan Vermeer with Brian Loney, Project Coordinator for the Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff and SVPDP Site Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, March 1, 2000.

[21] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California. Online.

[24] Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, *Accountability Report Card, 1998-1999*. Online. Available: http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us:8094/cgi-bin/db2www/acc-92-2.d2w/report. Accessed: March 10, 2000.

[25] Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, *Accountability Report Card, 1998-1999*. Online. Available: http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us:8094/cgi-bin/db2www/acc-91-1.d2w/report. Accessed: March 10, 2000.

[26] Telephone interview by Tinh Nguyen with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, May 12, 2000.

[27] Interview by Delia Perez and Tinh Nguyen with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[28] Greater Philadelphia First (GPF) Partnership for Reform, *A Citizen's Guide to the Philadelphia School Budget*. Online; and, Pennsylvania Department of Education, *Data File Documentation: Pennsylvania System of School Assessment—School and District Profiles*. Online.

[29] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Roberta West, SVPDP Site Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 12, 1999.

[30] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Melvin Garrison, District Social Studies Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[31] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[32] Garrison interview.

[33] New York City Board of Education, *Annual School Report: School Year 1998-1999*. Online.

[34] New York City Board of Education, New York, New York. Online. Available: http://www.nycenet.edu/news/annual198/s_demographics.htm. Accessed: May 18, 2000.

[35] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999.

[36] Lesser interview.

[37] Email announcement about SVPDP to Community School District 30 (Queens) school principals from Saul Steiner, Assistant Superintendent, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, n.d.

[38] Lesser interview.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina. Online.

[41] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Pam Van Dyk, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 12, 1999.

[42] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Pam Riley, Director, Center for the Prevention of School Violence, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999.

[43] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Nancy Cope, District Social Studies Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999.

[44] Ibid.

The SVPDP in Action: Denver Public Schools

SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity Makes a Lasting Impression

In February 2000, a diverse class of SVPDP eighth-grade students in the Denver Public Schools participated in a mock congressional hearing to complete its *We the People* culminating activity. The students made a lasting impression on the event's judges, all of whom were drawn from the Denver community and including lawyers, teachers, government officials, and high school students who had previously studied *We the People*. The judges were impressed with the depth of knowledge displayed by these eighth-grade students. They marveled at the students' facility in discussing complex issues, such as the implications of the work of John Locke, the importance of the Supreme Court's decision in *Marbury v. Madison*, and the critical decisions made by our founding fathers at constitutional conventions. The judges were also heartened to hear the students discuss the important role of the individual in a democracy and acknowledge the need for citizens to play a major role in their country's government.

The SVPDP teachers, students, and mock congressional hearing judges were excited by the fact that the students learned more than just another set of facts. As one of the participating teachers remarked to the researchers, "This is something our students need." A parent in attendance commented on the relevance of the congressional hearing, noting that the students who participated in it would remember it for the rest of their lives. Students said that they enjoyed working in groups, adding that they "would do it again" and that "it's better than anything else we do at school." One student remarked, "I learned that you have to listen to everyone's opinion. It's not just about you—it's about all of us." Many students also seemed to appreciate the importance of what they were experiencing. One stated that they "learned how to change government" and that "they should change government." Another student added that the mock hearing had taught her that "as you understand other people better, you know yourself better." Clearly, these students were learning about the civic principles and values that are at the core of our government and that peacefully bind our society together. As one of the judges commented, "This is probably their most meaningful experience in school."

Chapter 4. SVPDP Site Coordination and Site Evaluation

It is difficult to enact and show the effectiveness of an education demonstration program such as the SVPDP. To assess effectively and fairly the impact of an education intervention, its program managers must simultaneously attempt to promote program intervention efficacy *and* ensure the validity of the research design. The broad diversity of school district policies, available resources, school and classroom factors, parent and community involvement, and teacher and union concerns among the demonstration program sites often necessitates partially sacrificing one objective for the other, however. In the case of the SVPDP, the responsibility for ensuring proper first-year program implementation in the pilot districts largely has fallen on the SVPDP site coordinators, while that for ensuring research design validity has been shared among the site coordinators, the SVPDP site evaluators, CCE staff (especially Lou Rosen), and SVPDP evaluation consultants. In general, the first objective is a site coordination issue, while the second is an evaluation issue.

Of paramount interest to program advocates, designers, and administrators is effective program implementation, along with the accompanying research intended to assess program success. In general, however, the SVPDP teachers and school and district personnel in the first-year demonstration districts have been more interested in carrying out the program than in protecting the validity of the research design. Understandably, these SVPDP participants have been more concerned with whether the program's curricular materials engage students and foster student learning relative to nonviolence and citizenship than whether there have been sufficient and appropriate numbers of students and classrooms in the control group. Positive statistical outcomes from the evaluation are of little significance to these teachers and administrators unless they value the SVPDP materials and activities, endorse the program's educational benefits, and support its continued use in district classrooms and schools. Thus, given the SVPDP site coordinators' backgrounds in education, their responsibilities to teachers and students in their districts, and their commitment to the expanded use of civic education for violence prevention, it is reasonable that their interest in and understanding of the SVPDP have focused more on teacher, curricular, district, and classroom factors than on questions of research design validity.

Many of the successes and difficulties in the first-year SVPDP revolve, on the one hand, around emphasizing its implementation while balancing its realities and, on the other hand, around the issue of gaining meaningful evaluation data to help in designing and enacting the program in future years. Accordingly, this chapter is broadly divided into one section on SVPDP site coordination, which focuses on the responsibilities of the site coordinators, and another on SVPDP site evaluation, which explores district-level issues related to the research component of the program.

SVPDP Site Coordination

It is an impossible task for one person to coordinate all activities of the SVPDP in seven pilot school districts located in five states. The CCE therefore identified a person in each district to serve as its SVPDP site coordinator. The role of each district's site coordinator in developing and implementing the SVPDP has been quite broad, often including the initial responsibilities for making district contacts and informing them about the SVPDP; identifying teachers and schools that might agree to participate in the program's first year; distributing SVPDP materials; coordinating SVPDP teacher training workshops; administering SVPDP surveys and tests in both SVPDP and control classrooms; and providing a final evaluation of the program implementation in the district. In addition, during the SVPDP's first year, most site coordinators have effectively established the overall tenor of the program in their districts, counseled and guided SVPDP teachers during the year, set many of the rules for participating in the program, and helped encourage and motivate teachers to implement the program effectively.

Selection of SVPDP Site Coordinators

Much of the character and success of the first-year SVPDP implementation in the pilot districts reflects the individual backgrounds, strengths, idiosyncrasies, hard work, and dedication of the seven site coordinators. Indeed, the CCE is fortunate to have appointed such strong, well-respected, and well-connected educators to this position.

In choosing the site coordinators, the CCE selected people in the districts with previous experience of CCE programs and curricula. As table 4.1 shows, this experience is quite significant. In addition, the SVPDP site coordinators bring to the project substantial professional experiences as well as contacts from their current employment outside the program. Table 4.1 shows the site coordinators' regular titles and places of employment.

The site coordinators' familiarity with the CCE materials and teaching methods is of great benefit in implementing the SVPDP. For example, at a November 1999 SVPDP teacher training workshop in Community School District 30 (Queens), one teacher, with experience in reading rather than social studies, expressed concern to Debra Lesser, the SVPDP site coordinator, that "it is difficult to implement [the SVPDP materials] into the reading curriculum. We've got to align this to the reading curriculum."[1] Although she was not familiar with the reading curriculum, Lesser was very comfortable offering to assist the teacher in integrating the SVPDP materials into her course. All Lesser requested was the district's reading curriculum. Without her great familiarity with the CCE materials used in the SVPDP, it is doubtful she would have been able to offer this assistance.

Although the CCE should not require that educators selected as future SVPDP site coordinators have specific backgrounds, an examination of the program's first year suggests that those coordinators who are or have been district employees generally have better contacts in their districts and a better understanding of district policies, politics, and dynamics. They have been better able to maneuver effectively within their school

systems to address the needs of the SVPDP teachers, curricular materials, and research design.

Table 4.1
SVPDP Site Coordinators' Employment and Prior CCE Experience

Site Coordinator	Employment and Prior CCE Experience
Nicole Williams, Brooklyn	Title I Facilitator, Office of Comprehensive Planning and School Improvement, New York City Board of Education. Has had a working relationship with the CCE for over eight years, including service as both a national and an international consultant for the CCE.
Loyal Darr, Denver	Faculty Member, University of Denver, and Former District Social Studies Coordinator, Denver Public Schools. Has used CCE materials as a teacher. Serves as a CCE Congressional District Coordinator. Helps coordinate the CCE *We the People* competitions in Denver.
Brian Loney, Jefferson County	Project Coordinator, Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff, Jefferson County Public Schools. Has been a CCE Congressional District Coordinator and a CCE state trainer.
Elaine Craig Segal, Los Angeles	Education Consultant with Evaluation Strategies, a private consulting firm in the Los Angeles region. Has served as former CCE Director of Research and Evaluation and CCE Director of *We the People* Program. Has worked with the CCE for 13 years.
Roberta West, Philadelphia	Program Director of the Law, Education, and Participation (LEAP) Programs, Temple University School of Law. Has been trained by the CCE to lead CCE teacher training sessions.
[Melvin Garrison, Philadelphia]	[Social Studies Coordinator for the School District of Philadelphia. (Garrison is technically the SVPDP district contact, but he assumed many of the responsibilities held by the SVPDP site coordinators in other districts.)]
Debra Lesser, Queens	Executive Director, Justice Resource Center, a not-for-profit law and civic education organization based at Martin Luther King High School in Manhattan. Coordinates CCE *We the People* competitions for New York City schools. Has served as a CCE Congressional District Coordinator and has taught CCE materials at the high school level.
Carleen Wray, Wake County	Assistant Director, Center for the Prevention of School Violence, Raleigh, North Carolina. Has substantial experience with presenting CCE teacher training sessions.

Sources: Interviews by LBJ School researchers with SVPDP site coordinators during visits to the SVPDP demonstration districts, November and December 1999; statements by the SVPDP site coordinators at an SVPDP Planning Meeting, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, October 15-16, 1999.

Several first-year SVPDP site coordinators are current or former employees of the school systems into which the program is being introduced. In Jefferson County, Loney is an employee of the district; Darr recently retired from an administrative position in the Denver Public Schools; and both Williams and Lesser are employees of the New York

City Board of Education, which includes Community School District 23 (Brooklyn) and Community School District 30 (Queens). Further, Garrison, the SVPDP district contact and social studies coordinator in Philadelphia (see table 4.1), is working closely with the SVPDP and has assumed many of the responsibilities assigned to site coordinators in the other pilot districts. Three coordinators—Craig Segal in Los Angeles, West in Philadelphia, and Wray in Wake County—are not employed by the school districts for which they are SVPDP site coordinators.

Although this cannot solely be explained by the SVPDP site coordinators' employment, the three districts in which they are not nor have ever been district employees have experienced problems not encountered in the other districts. For example, researchers and SVPDP evaluators had greater difficulty gaining access to SVPDP classrooms in Wake County and Philadelphia than in other districts during the first year of the program. In Los Angeles, an additional layer of SVPDP communication hierarchy has been formed; SVPDP teachers must channel their questions and concerns through a school district employee, who then passes this information on to Craig Segal. In the other districts, on the other hand, communication between the SVPDP site coordinators and the SVPDP teachers has been more direct.

An SVPDP questionnaire administered by the LBJ School researchers asked participating SVPDP teachers: "How many times have you had contact with the SVPDP site coordinator in your district (outside teacher training sessions)?" Interestingly, as table 4.2 indicates, the SVPDP site coordinators who are not current or recent district employees appear to have had less contact with their teachers. [Note that table 4.2 shows the average number of contacts by responding teachers. Given that a teacher's response of "6" could correspond to six *or more* contacts with the site coordinator, there is a possible slight imbalance in the figures, since responses of more than six contacts are not given as much weight as responses of six or less contacts. This possible bias is the same for all sites, however, so comparisons among the seven SVPDP sites are still valid.]

Table 4.2
SVPDP Teachers' Contacts with SVPDP Site Coordinators Outside of SVPDP Teacher Training Workshops

District	Average Number of Contacts On a Scale of 0 (No Contact at All) to 6 (Six or More Contacts)
Brooklyn	*4.0*
Denver	*3.8*
Jefferson County	*3.4*
Los Angeles	1.9
Philadelphia	1.7
Queens	*3.4*
Wake County	2.3
All Districts	2.9

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.
Note: Italics indicate districts in which site coordinator is a current or recently retired district employee.

Responsibilities of SVPDP Site Coordinators

Although the SVPDP site coordinators were first contacted at different stages in the initial planning of the program and have diverse backgrounds and positions, the CCE did a good job of developing a general description for the coordinators' activities and responsibilities during the first-year implementation of the SVPDP. During fall 1999, the CCE modified this initial description somewhat to reflect the reality of the SVPDP pilot districts; nevertheless, it largely captures the essence of a site coordinator's job. Statements of the site coordinators' activities and responsibilities were included in SVPDP documents drafted by the CCE in the first half of 1999.

One such document was the contract for services that the CCE negotiated with each SVPDP site coordinator. The following is the general statement of the scope of site coordinator services included in this contract:

> Work and services shall include identification of a minimum of ten teachers in the school district willing to participate in the project; serving as a liaison with school district administration; working with the school district to set up a minimum of six days of teacher training during the school year; administering the pre and post survey to each participating class; attending at least one administrative meeting in Los Angeles; maintaining close contact with the Project Director on the progress of the project; assisting with evaluating each stage of the project; submitting an end of year evaluation.[2]

In early 1999, the CCE also developed a detailed listing of 15 responsibilities that it subsequently provided to each site coordinator:

1. Attend first meeting with local school administration—April [1999].
2. Identify three–five local elementary or middle schools that agree to participate in project. We need ten classrooms minimum. Teachers receiving curricular materials must agree to attend training session during the summer.
3. Attend planning and administration meeting in Los Angeles May 21 [1999].
4. Set up teacher training sessions in local area.
5. Conduct teacher training sessions during July or August [1999]. Funds are available to bring teacher training assistance to the site.
6. Administer first survey to students in experimental and control groups at each school site. Send surveys to project director.
7. Complete first checkpoint evaluation form. Classroom visitations are required to complete the form.

8. Conduct fall follow-up meeting with participating teachers.

9. Attend winter progress meeting in Los Angeles.

10. Complete second checkpoint evaluation form. Classroom visitations are required to complete the form.

11. Conduct winter follow-up meeting with participating teachers.

12. Conduct spring follow-up meeting with participating teachers.

13. Complete third checkpoint evaluation form. Classroom visitations are required to complete [the] form.

14. Administer final survey to students in experimental and control groups at each school site. Send surveys to project director.

15. Submit short written evaluation of the project from a local perspective to the project director and the local school district superintendent of schools.[3]

Probably the most important, yet least explicitly cited, coordinator responsibility has been to provide the SVPDP teachers with day-to-day administrative and curricular planning support. While the site coordinators have effectively carried out numerous other SVPDP responsibilities, they have particularly distinguished themselves in the area of teacher support. An LBJ School project questionnaire asked each SVPDP teacher to "[a]ssess the quality of your interaction with the SVPDP site coordinator in [your] district." Table 4.3 summarizes the teachers' responses to this question.

Table 4.3
Quality of Interaction between SVPDP Teachers and SVPDP Site Coordinators

District	Average Response On a Scale of 1 (Not Helpful) to 7 (Very Helpful)
Brooklyn	5.0
Denver	6.0
Jefferson County	5.7
Los Angeles	5.5
Philadelphia	5.7
Queens	5.9
Wake County	4.7
All Districts	5.5

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

Table 4.3 confirms a high quality of interaction between SVPDP teachers and site coordinators in each district. This speaks well of the people in the site coordinator positions. Interestingly, it is in the district with the most limited access to its SVPDP schools and classrooms, namely, the Wake County Public School System, that the

SVPDP teachers have been least positive about their interaction with the site coordinator. This finding suggests the importance of having site coordinators who are, if not district employees, at least unencumbered by strict school district regulations regarding access to schools and classrooms.

SVPDP Site Evaluation

Achieving the CCE's objective of assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the first year of the SVPDP has required an effective evaluation plan. Because the first year of the SVPDP has included thousands of students from seven diverse school districts, all participating in the program for different reasons, the task of evaluation has been difficult and ambitious. Given the program's scope, it has been important that the evaluation plan introduce some consistency to it, and thus provide a basis for bringing about an even more successful second year for the project. Moreover, by attempting, as much as possible, to standardize its techniques for collecting and assessing student responses on both the civic knowledge-based and attitudinal surveys, the CCE has striven for quantifiable student outcome data. Survey results are vitally important to the continuation and expansion of the program, since the U.S. Congress, other school districts and teachers nationwide, and education policymakers are interested in seeing whether the SVPDP and its underlying premise are worthwhile and valid. The SVPDP evaluators, therefore, serve the dual purposes of helping to ensure the validity of the research design and providing additional sets of eyes that can view the program from an outside perspective.[4]

The evaluators of the SVPDP's first year faced a formidable task in developing a valid research design. Real-world situations, such as those occurring in schools and classrooms, do not lend themselves well to true experimental testing. For example, selecting perfectly random experimental and control groups is difficult, as a curriculum intervention must normally be done in classrooms whose student compositions are impossible to control. The SVPDP evaluation plan, therefore, uses a quasi-experimental research design in recognition of the fact that a random selection of experimental and control groups is not possible.

The design does, nonetheless, implement several controls to isolate the program's effects. These include administering knowledge and attitudinal tests to students in both the experimental and control group classrooms, first at the start of the school year, before the SVPDP materials are introduced, and then at the end of the school year, after these materials have been used in the SVPDP classrooms. The SVPDP teachers and their classrooms constitute the experimental sections in a pilot district, while other classrooms in the same schools and district, with similar student compositions, serve as control groups. The control group classrooms, however, are not randomly selected.

The large scope of the program, as well as the minimal CCE staffing available to direct and oversee district-level program implementation, has further complicated the evaluation process, making it exceedingly difficult to ensure experimental controls and consistency in all seven pilot districts. Moreover, many SVPDP site evaluators were

unclear of their roles at the beginning of the 1999–2000 school year, and in some districts this lack of clarity continued throughout the school year, as the CCE's expectations of site evaluators' roles changed dramatically. The following section examines issues relating to the site evaluation of the SVPDP.

Selection of SVPDP Site Evaluators

Criteria

The CCE sought SVPDP site evaluators who had significant experience in research evaluation strategies. The preferred candidate in each of the seven districts would have a doctorate, but this was not a requirement if the evaluator had completed substantial course work in research evaluation strategies. The CCE also required the site evaluators to have experience with student interview techniques and adult focus groups.[5] Furthermore, the evaluators were expected to be able to attend SVPDP planning meetings at the CCE in California in October 1999 and June 2000. For the most part, the CCE adhered to these criteria; however, the site evaluators eventually selected in the seven districts had a wide range of evaluation experience.

Selection by District

The SVPDP site evaluator for the Wake County Public School System in North Carolina has been Pam Van Dyk. She has her own evaluation company, called Evaluation Resources. Pam Riley, director of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence in Raleigh, contacted her about serving as the site evaluator for the Wake County SVPDP pilot site. Van Dyk has worked with the Center for the Prevention of School Violence in the past, but this was her first time working for the CCE. Riley sent Van Dyk's credentials to Rosen at the CCE, and Van Dyk met with Rosen in Raleigh in late summer 1999. Van Dyk is working toward her Ph.D. in educational programming at North Carolina State University.[6]

The SVPDP site evaluator for the Los Angeles Unified School District SVPDP pilot site has been Amy Shah, a second-year graduate student in psychology at Pepperdine University. Because she is interested in program testing and evaluation, she responded to an advertisement placed by Rosen on a university job hotline. Shah has acknowledged her minimal experience with program evaluation and the wide gap in experience between herself and other SVPDP evaluators.[7]

In the Denver Public Schools, the SVPDP site evaluator has been Nicholas J. Cutforth. He is an assistant professor in curriculum and instruction in the College of Education at the University of Denver. Cutforth's research and teaching interests include urban education; the social, moral, and cultural dimensions of teaching; physical education for urban children and youth; and ethnographic research. He chairs the Denver University/Northwestside Schools Partnership: United for Educational Excellence, a coalition of teachers, administrators, and university faculty working to improve education in urban schools.[8]

The SVPDP site evaluator for the Jefferson County Public Schools has been Dale Greenawald, currently the director of Learning Improvement Services, an education consulting firm specializing in teacher training, curriculum development, and assessment. He is a former classroom teacher and holds a doctorate in history from Carnegie Mellon University. Greenawald has considerable experience with curriculum and development, having worked as a consultant on projects run by the CCE, West Publishing, Street Law, and others. He lives in New Mexico and commutes to Jefferson County to carry out his SVPDP evaluation duties.[9]

Walter Fisher has been the SVPDP site evaluator for Community School District 23 (Brooklyn). A consultant and trainer for the Anti-Defamation League in New York City, he has worked as a consultant with the CCE for several years, specifically with the Civitas International Exchange Program. Fisher sees his role in the SVPDP as a continuation of his active involvement with the CCE in its other programs. Additionally, he attended the December 1999 SVPDP teacher training workshop in Brooklyn to present information to the SVPDP teachers on how to facilitate program implementation.[10]

The Community School District 30 (Queens) has had two evaluators, Sonja Castenada and Ingrid Gelbard. Castenada and Gelbard are both graduate students at Columbia University in New York City, and were hired after responding to advertisements that Rosen placed in a Columbia Teachers College employment bulletin.[11] Rosen accepted them both—they were the first to respond—and assigned them as evaluators for the Queens SVPDP site. Both Castenada and Gelbard are younger and have less professional experience than the evaluators in most other SVPDP sites. Their experience in evaluation and research methods is, however, more recent than that of some of the other site evaluators.

The SVPDP site evaluator for the School District of Philadelphia has been Morris Jenkins, the executive director of the Partnership for Creative Action in Philadelphia. He has both a J.D. and a Ph.D. Rosen originally approached Jenkins about working on the SVPDP because of Jenkins' extensive experience with violence prevention, conflict resolution, and community conflicts, as well as his past work with the CCE. Jenkins also is currently participating in CCE's Civitas International Exchange Program in western Russia.[12]

Communication between Evaluators

While communication between SVPDP site evaluators and site coordinators at the district level has been adequate, there has been relatively little among the evaluators across the seven district sites. The evaluators for Queens said they remembered discussion about a possible listserv specifically for the SVPDP evaluators.[13] This has not been created, however. The Wake County site evaluator similarly lamented the lack of contact among evaluators. She noted that she feels isolated, and she believes that other evaluators share some of her concerns. She emphasized that a listserv would be great not only to ease the sense of isolation, but also to share best practices and to discuss evaluative methodologies with other SVPDP evaluators.[14]

Roles and Responsibilities of SVPDP Site Evaluators

Initial Job Description

In mid-1999, during the initial planning stages for implementing the SVPDP, the CCE envisioned a large role for the SVPDP site evaluators, particularly with respect to administering SVPDP student attitudinal and civic knowledge tests at the beginning ("pretest") and end ("posttest") of the school year. As discussed in chapter 2, the civic knowledge test for students is the *We the People* Level II (or, in some classrooms, Level I) test. Bill LaFitte, an evaluation consultant to the CCE, worked with Rosen to create the student attitudinal test to measure changes in students' attitudes as a result of their SVPDP participation for a year. The attitudinal test contains a series of questions designed to draw out students' attitudes on tolerance, authority, power, and other key indicators the SVPDP seeks to improve. The tests were distributed to the SVPDP site evaluators in August 1999.[15]

According to the initial SVPDP site evaluator job description, each evaluator was to distribute the pretests to the participating teachers in the district at the start of the school year; teachers would then return the test data to the evaluator after administering the tests. The site evaluator also was to conduct pretest focus groups with the students and with the parents of participating students. As the academic year progressed, the site evaluator was to observe each SVPDP teacher on two occasions when he or she used SVPDP curricular materials. Following the completion of the *We the People* and the *Project Citizen* culminating activities, the site evaluator was to conduct focus groups and administer the student attitudinal and civic knowledge posttests to measure changes in students' knowledge and attitude resulting from participation in the SVPDP. Finally, the evaluator was to compile pretest and posttest results, and act as the general reviewer for the final SVPDP evaluation report in his or her district. The evaluators were to be paid on an hourly basis, according to guidelines set up by the CCE that specified how long each contracted task should take to complete.

Change in Roles during SVPDP Implementation

The role of the SVPDP site evaluator changed dramatically as the SVPDP unfolded during its first year of implementation, with the scope of evaluator duties being substantially reduced. Following the October 1999 SVPDP planning meeting at the CCE, Nicholas Cutforth and Gary Lichtenstein, who was assisting Cutforth in the Denver Public Schools SVPDP site evaluation, suggested to Rosen two alternative systems for evaluating the SVPDP. Both models involved curtailing the duties of the site evaluators while maintaining a qualitative evaluation approach and keeping in mind the program's goals.[16] In October 1999, the CCE adopted what Cutforth and Lichtenstein referred to as "the Partial Model," to be used in all seven SVPDP pilot sites. This model called for three observations of two "high implementing" teachers by site evaluators during the school year, and a reduced writing, interviewing, and analytical role for evaluators.[17] The evaluators' role was curtailed primarily due to budgetary constraints, because site evaluator costs during the initial months of the 1999–2000 school year far exceeded Rosen's projections. Additionally, Cutforth and Rosen agreed that the new method

would be more analytically sound than the initial evaluation plan, given the disparate implementation of the SVPDP across the seven districts. Rosen informed site evaluators of this CCE decision in a memorandum that outlined the change in their roles and in CCE's expectations.[18]

The changes adopted by the CCE had a tremendous effect on the evaluation component of the SVPDP. Cutting back on site evaluator duties affected what evaluators were expected to do and how they could expect to be paid. Evaluators' interviews of SVPDP students were eliminated because they were both costly and excessively time-consuming. Another important change was in the evaluators' teacher and classroom observations. The CCE decided to have the SVPDP site coordinator in each site select two or three "high-implementing" SVPDP teachers to observe, rather than observing all the SVPDP teachers in that district, as had originally been planned. Moreover, the high-implementing teachers were to be observed once by the site coordinator and once by the site evaluator. The evaluators would then report on their observations. The CCE also elected not to have the site evaluators serve as general reviewers of the final evaluation for their sites, and some evaluators have had no access to the pretest and posttest data in their districts. Instead, the CCE evaluation consultants (Lafitte and Esfandiari) have been analyzing all the test data from all the pilot sites, and Rosen is drafting reports for all districts.[19]

Changes such as these in the evaluation plan, while appropriate in light of program implementation realities, necessarily have affected the interpretation of results from the first-year implementation of the SVPDP. While the quantitative portion of the quasi-experimental design (i.e., the test results) has been able to include, to some degree, representative control group classrooms associated with the self-selected experimental (i.e., SVPDP) group ones, the qualitative portion of the design (including classroom observations) has been confined only to those few teachers selected by the site coordinators as high implementers. Thus caution is needed in drawing definitive conclusions about student outcomes and program replicability from these first-year evaluation results.

Further compounding the challenge of interpreting program outcomes is the reality that not all changes in the role of the SVPDP site evaluator have resulted from CCE directives. In several instances, changes have been made at the district level, either by the evaluators themselves or because of site-specific factors. Such actions can skew evaluation outcome results. SVPDP students in Los Angeles, for example, were told they did not have to answer all pretest questions or even take the attitudinal pretest.[20] In Wake County, district policy severely limits outside access to the district's classrooms. The SVPDP site evaluator has to schedule classroom observations in advance and get approval from a school's assistant principal before visiting. That makes unscheduled visits impossible, which allows the SVPDP teachers to prepare specifically for times when they know they will be observed.[21] These kinds of mid-course adaptations and local differences in the research component necessarily affect what the site evaluators observe and report, as well as student test results, and should be noted in the CCE's final report on the first-year implementation of the SVPDP.

Understanding of Roles

In fall 1999, at the SVPDP's outset, the evaluative research segment was the least clear of all program components. Admittedly, there was little for the evaluators to do during the initial stages of the SVPDP. Their major task then was to disseminate student attitudinal and civic knowledge pretests. One notable problem that occurred in some districts was the late or unannounced arrival of the pretests. In Wake County, for example, pretests arrived late and were sent directly to the SVPDP teachers, who did not know what to do with them. When these teachers sought guidance from the site evaluator, Van Dyk, she did not know what to do with them either, because the CCE had not given her complete instructions.[22] She only knew that she was supposed to distribute the tests. Thus, even when evaluators might have been playing an important early role in fostering the SVPDP's smooth implementation and ensuring that all its participants were knowledgeable about the program's research component, their uncertainty about their responsibilities prevented their making significant contributions. In general, it was not until the SVPDP planning meeting at the CCE in mid-October 1999, during which the CCE's evaluation methodology was explained to the entire group of site evaluators and site coordinators, that the evaluators' responsibilities became clear.

As a result of the mid-October CCE meeting and the subsequent memorandum from Rosen to site evaluators about narrowing their responsibilities, the evaluators gained a better understanding of their roles, even while those roles changed. Experienced evaluators have been more comfortable than those evaluators who are relatively new to education program evaluation with changes in their roles. For example, in Queens, site evaluators Castenada and Gelbard looked to the Queens site coordinator, Debra Lesser, and Rosen to guide them following the changes in evaluators' roles. Indeed, one of the evaluators noted to the researchers that she had "difficulty figuring out what's going on."[23]

SVPDP site evaluators in some districts have needed to be acutely conscious of the political nature of their SVPDP responsibilities. In Queens, the evaluators have had to refer to their observations as "visits," so that the teachers' union does not feel that teachers are being judged.[24] Likewise, in Philadelphia, the SVPDP site evaluator emphasized to the researchers and the SVPDP teachers at the November 13 teacher training workshop that he would neither be observing and recording teaching skill nor asking students about their teachers.[25]

Across the seven SVPDP districts, teachers seem to have understood the site evaluators' role less well than they understand the roles of the other SVPDP participants. In some districts, the teachers have been unprepared for, or have not comprehended, the evaluators' responsibilities with respect to their classrooms. For example, in Jefferson County, the researchers observed that several of the SVPDP teachers seemed confused about the site evaluator's role in that district. One teacher had asked the evaluator for advice on *Project Citizen*. Once he responded that giving advice was not his job, she wanted to know what his job actually was. The teachers whom the evaluator had not visited did not even know who he was. Some of the SVPDP teachers whom he had

visited were upset that the evaluator did so without advance notice, sometimes asking to observe classes on days when they had not planned to do SVPDP lessons. The teachers wanted him to let them know when he planned to visit, and to be more accommodating of their schedules. Some teachers observed by the site evaluator simply felt that too many people were observing them too often.[26] By contrast, by the time the SVPDP site evaluator in Wake County is able to obtain access to an SVPDP classroom, the teacher not only knows she is coming, but has had ample time to prepare a lesson for that day. Table 4.4 illustrates the SVPDP teachers' understanding of the site evaluator's role.

Table 4.4
SVPDP Teachers' Understanding of the Role of the SVPDP Site Evaluator

District	Average Response on a Scale of 1 (Not at All Clear about Role) to 7 (Very Clearly Understand Role)
Brooklyn	4.6
Denver	4.9
Jefferson County	4.3
Los Angeles	4.8
Philadelphia	4.9
Queens	5.3
Wake County	3.5
All Districts	4.6

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

At the time of the first SVPDP site visits by the researchers in November and December 1999, SVPDP teachers in several districts did not have a good understanding of the evaluator's role. Overall, though, teachers' comprehension of that role improved as the year progressed. In Wake County, where—once again—outside access to classrooms is severely limited, teachers have a poor understanding of the evaluator's role compared with teachers in other districts (see table 4.4). As the SVPDP expands and begins its second year of implementation, it will be important to explain earlier in the year, and more fully, the roles and responsibilities of all SVPDP participants, so that SVPDP site coordinators, site evaluators, teachers, and others understand everyone's importance to the success of the SVPDP.

Conclusions

The SVPDP, as implemented during 1999–2000, called for the completion of not one, but two, very challenging and complex tasks. First, the CCE has had to work closely with diverse school districts, schools, and teachers, mainly through the SVPDP site coordinator (and, at times, the SVPDP contact) in each district, to integrate a curriculum-based and civics-oriented violence prevention program into existing courses of study in selected schools and classrooms having widely varying curricular requirements and course materials. In addition, the CCE has had to design and execute a research and evaluation design larger than any it had previously attempted, in order to assess whether the SVPDP curricular materials can, in one school year, change student attitudes about

violence, power, and authority and student civics knowledge. Either one of these efforts would by itself have been a daunting undertaking. Balancing them and achieving both has proven to be exceedingly challenging, making the first-year implementation of the SVPDP in the seven pilot districts even more remarkable.

Much of the initial responsibility for completing the tasks of program implementation and evaluation fell to the selected districts' site coordinators and site evaluators. Much of the SVPDP's success, particularly in teacher training and curriculum integration, has been due to the leadership skills, education experience, and commitment to civic education displayed by site coordinators in tackling and solving emerging implementation problems. Especially in districts where site coordinators are or have been district employees, their extensive knowledge of local curricula and policy, and of administrators to contact for support, has proven invaluable during the SVPDP's first year. In summary, the role of site coordinator in implementing the SVPDP has been essential and generally successful.

Succinct conclusions about the SVPDP site evaluator position can be made less easily after only one year of the program. The evaluators' task was severely hampered in the beginning by lack of understanding and the minimal degree of importance that SVPDP teachers, site coordinators, and others attached to the program's research component. Thus, when site evaluators did try to carry out their responsibilities, they were met with suspicion and even hostility from SVPDP participants who thought the evaluators' involvement was unnecessary. As described earlier, the SVPDP's research component changed over the course of the program's first year. Not surprisingly, then, the role of the site evaluator changed as well. Because of these changes, the first-year results of the site evaluators' work need to be viewed in a manner much more limited than was originally anticipated. Their efforts and recommendations should be neither ignored nor discounted, but a more complete assessment of their role and the results they achieved during the successful SVPDP implementation requires more program years to be completed.

One critically important benefit coming from the dedicated work of both the SVPDP site coordinators and site evaluators has been the creation of a knowledge base detailing what did and did not work in the diverse school and community environments represented among the first-year pilot districts. This knowledge should be shared, examined, understood, and assessed so that first-year lessons can contribute to the design and implementation of the SVPDP in future years, and in additional districts.

Recommendations

The following recommendations identify actions that could improve district-level SVPDP coordination and evaluation in future program years.

1. *The CCE should appoint SVPDP site coordinators who have a strong relationship with their school districts (e.g., a district social studies coordinator); are familiar with CCE curricular materials, teaching methods, and programming; have teaching experience (preferably in their current districts); are able to serve as effective teacher*

trainers of CCE materials; and have the requisite understanding of and commitment to program implementation and civic education to facilitate the CCE's evaluation of the program. Coordinators with these characteristics will find it easier to navigate the difficulties that inevitably arise during the SVPDP implementation, including those in areas such as curriculum integration and teacher training. The example of the Queens SVPDP site coordinator is a telling one: when an SVPDP teacher in that district expressed concern about integrating the CCE materials into the reading curriculum, the coordinator relied upon her familiarity with the CCE materials and her position as an employee of the district to address the teacher's concern confidently and effectively. This recommendation should in no way suggest that educators without all these qualifications cannot be effective and successful SVPDP site coordinators. Indeed, quite the opposite has proven to be the case during the first year of the SVPDP. Nevertheless, by seeking site coordinators with these characteristics, the CCE will strengthen the implementation of the SVPDP. At the same time, it is unlikely the CCE will find people in all SVPDP districts who possess these qualifications, especially as the program expands. Thus, in districts where the appointment of an SVPDP site coordinator who meets all of the criteria listed is impossible, it is important that the CCE be aware of the coordinators' strengths and work to identify how best to help them carry out their SVPDP duties.

2. *The CCE should thoroughly brief SVPDP site coordinators at the start of each school year about rationales for both the research component and the education intervention. Coordinators also should make sure that participating teachers are fully aware of the research component of the program.* Because many experienced site coordinator candidates will know more about the curricular, political, and classroom issues related to the SVPDP implementation than about the design needs of the program's research component, the CCE should make an extra effort to educate them about the latter. During the 1999–2000 SVPDP program year, several district sites had difficulties with the testing and evaluation procedures, some of which might have been avoided if their site coordinators had been more aware of the research design and its importance. The CCE should work to ensure that the SVPDP site coordinators have adequate information to coordinate the research design and education intervention elements of the program as well as the components involving teachers, school districts, and the CCE. Site coordinators will then be in a much better position to ensure that the participating teachers also understand the program's ongoing assessment requirements, including classroom observations, and test controls. In this way, the implementing teachers are more likely to appreciate and respond to the research component of the SVPDP.

3. *The CCE should seek to streamline its communication with the SVPDP teachers by using the site coordinators more effectively as intermediaries.* On occasion, the SVPDP teachers complained to the researchers that they received seemingly contradictory messages coming from different sources, including the site coordinators, the site evaluators, the SVPDP district contacts, and the CCE. Many of these misunderstandings could have been avoided had all information provided to the SVPDP teachers (except for that agreed upon at the start of the school year) been

communicated through the site coordinators. A more streamlined flow of information would avoid conflicting signals and instructions, and would ensure that teachers would know whom to contact when they have questions. Their being able to rely on site coordinators as intermediaries would also increase accountability for miscommunications or misperceptions. This increased accountability would not mean that site coordinators would always be to blame for communication breakdowns; rather, by working through a single point of contact with the teachers, the CCE and site coordinators would be better able to understand and eliminate such failures in communication as might arise.

4. *In the second and subsequent years of the implementation of the SVPDP, the CCE should consider limiting the scope of the formal research component of the program, while simultaneously introducing a limited, informal assessment in all SVPDP districts for which the site coordinators, working with the CCE, would be responsible.* The scope of the first year's research design was probably too ambitious, given the CCE's resources and relative inexperience with large-scale research. It is very difficult to maintain necessary experimental controls in a project as large and geographically dispersed as the SVPDP. Moreover, this problem will be even more serious in future years, since the second and subsequent years of the SVPDP are likely to include many more districts, schools, and teachers than participated in its first year. Thus, as the CCE expands SVPDP implementation in future years, this expansion should not include an equivalent expansion of the program's research component. In fact, the CCE may wish to limit rather than expand the number of district sites included in the research component in order to maintain better control and obtain more valid outcomes. Such a limitation also would allow some districts that participated in the first year of the SVPDP to continue their involvement as non-research sites. Finally, in addition to the more formal evaluation and research done in a few districts, a limited, more informal assessment of the program's implementation could be conducted by the CCE through the SVPDP site coordinators in all participating districts. This could provide useful national perspectives on the overall effectiveness of the program, as well as on its design and curricular intervention.

5. *In the second and subsequent years of the implementation of the SVPDP, the CCE should consider replacing the SVPDP site evaluators in the participating districts with a smaller number of evaluators responsible for performing on-site evaluations of those few districts involved in the formal research component of the program (see recommendation 4).* Reducing the number of districts involved in the formal research design could allow the CCE to hire fewer program evaluators, who then would be responsible for implementing the research component of the program. This would help enhance the consistency and validity of the research outcomes. It would also improve the likelihood that the CCE could hire evaluators with qualifications appropriate to its needs.

6. *The CCE should facilitate expanded and ongoing communication among SVPDP site coordinators and program evaluators.* Whether or not the CCE reduces the number of SVPDP sites to be formally evaluated, or the number of researchers carrying out

this evaluation (see recommendation 4), enhanced communication (e.g., through a listserv) among all of the program's evaluators would enhance the exchange of ideas and insights and help to build an SVPDP community. The quality of the research will improve if the evaluators are more easily able to share with each other what does and does not work. Moreover, in future years it is likely that the SVPDP site coordinators will be expected to provide assistance to the CCE in conducting and reporting limited, informal assessments of implementation outcomes specific to their districts. It will be critically important to this process that site coordinators understand the formal research activities of the SVPDP evaluators as district-specific assessments are planned and conducted.

Notes

[1] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 13, 1999.

[2] Center for Civic Education, "Contract for Subcontractor Service: A School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program," Calabasas, California, Spring 1999.

[3] Center for Civic Education, "Responsibilities of [SVPDP] Site Coordinator," Calabasas, California, Spring 1999.

[4] Telephone interview by LBJ School researchers with Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director of Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, February 22, 2000.

[5] Center for Civic Education, "Program Evaluators Needed" (program announcement), Calabasas, California, n.d.

[6] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Pam Van Dyk, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 12, 1999.

[7] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Amy Shah, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[8] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Nicholas J. Cutforth, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 2, 1999.

[9] Telephone interview by Susan Vermeer with Dale Greenawald, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, March 20, 2000.

[10] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga with Walter Fisher, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, December 18, 1999.

[11] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Sonya Casteneda and Ingrid Gelbard, SVPDP Site Evaluators, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999; and interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999.

[12] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Morris Jenkins, SVPDP Site Evaluator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[13] Casteneda and Gelbard interview; and Lesser interview.

[14] Van Dyk interview.

[15] Memorandum regarding SVPDP Student Survey Questions from the Center for Civic Education to SVPDP Site Evaluators, Calabasas, California, August 23, 1999.

[16] Memorandum regarding Research Proposal for the Denver Site from Nicholas Cutforth and Gary Lichtenstein, SVPDP Site Evaluators, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, to Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director of Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, October 17, 1999.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Memorandum to SVPDP Site Coordinators, Site Evaluators et al. from Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director of Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, October 19, 1999.

[19] Shah interview.

[20] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[21] Van Dyk interview.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Casteneda and Gelbard interview; and Lesser interview.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[26] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, February 29, 2000.

The SVPDP in Action: Jefferson County Public Schools

SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop Highlights Content and Practical Applications

Most of the SVPDP teachers in the Jefferson County Public Schools have little formal academic training in civics or social studies, because, as teachers of fifth graders and sixth graders, they hold elementary school certification rather than the usually more subject-based middle school and secondary school certification. Knowing that these teachers needed and welcomed additional training in civics content, the Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator arranged to have Laurie McNown, a professor of American government at the University of Colorado at Boulder, give presentations on government and public policy at two SVPDP teacher training workshops. When McNown conducted her second training workshop in February 2000, she focused on how public policy is formulated, with an eye to preparing the teachers for conducting the *Project Citizen* culminating activity. She talked about how policy agendas are set through the influence of interest groups and public institutions; discussed how and why some issues make it onto the public policy agenda, while others do not; walked the teachers through a simple cost-benefit analysis framework they might use to talk with their students about making policy decisions; and examined how public policy gets designed, implemented, and evaluated. The researchers observed that the SVPDP teachers responded enthusiastically to McNown's workshop presentation and thought that their students would be able to grasp these concepts, especially the idea that different interest groups identify and assess costs and benefits differently.

McNown ended her public policy workshop presentation by doing an exercise with the Jefferson County SVPDP teachers. First, she divided the teachers into groups and asked each group to imagine a dinner party where the guests must divide a hypothetical chocolate cake into ten equal parts. Once each group had decided how to do this, McNown asked a number of questions to complicate the activity: Do you have equality if someone cannot eat cake? Is it legitimate to give more to someone who needs more? Does the person who brought the cake deserve more? Does the person who cuts the cake get to decide who gets what? Should we just give people equal forks and let them fight it out to decide who gets what? How do we deal with people who were not invited to the party? McNown offered this activity as one that could be used to teach fifth and sixth graders about the challenges and pressures that policymakers face.

Chapter 5. SVPDP Teachers and Teacher Training

Teachers are the backbone of the SVPDP. Working with a combination of education professionals, including SVPDP site coordinators and district social studies coordinators, teachers are the primary implementers of the SVPDP. However, their role in the SVPDP extends beyond delivering the program to students through their classroom instruction. Outside the classroom, teachers participate in SVPDP teacher training workshops that supplement their own backgrounds and professional experiences to help to shape how they perceive and implement the SVPDP program.

This chapter begins by describing teachers' backgrounds and their perceptions of the program. It then explores the teachers' role as program implementer, and some of the obstacles that challenge teachers in their day-to-day SVPDP responsibilities. Teacher training workshops available to all SVPDP teachers at each district site are an important resource in meeting such challenges. The chapter concludes, therefore, with an overview and description of the training workshops' content, and highlights best practices shared among the SVPDP sites.

Teacher Selection and Background

Teachers participating in the SVPDP have varied backgrounds, in terms both of their professional experience and training and of their familiarity with civic education and CCE materials. In general, however, most first-year SVPDP teachers have backgrounds in either social studies or history, and have been teaching for more than five years.

Selection of SVPDP Teachers

Once the 1999–2000 SVPDP district and school sites had been chosen, the next step was to select teachers, site coordinators, and site evaluators to implement the program. How teachers were chosen varied not only from site to site, but also from school to school within districts. While selection procedures varied, the decision-making was not *ad hoc*. Indeed, each district site steered its own course in handling the selection process. In Brooklyn, the selection method was simple: all social studies teachers of certain grade levels in SVPDP schools could participate. In other sites, such as Philadelphia, principals suggested teachers as participants. In Wake County and Queens, the teachers primarily were self-selected; thus, both of these sites depended on teachers to volunteer as SVPDP participants. At all sites, the selection decisions reflected input from a number of persons, including SVPDP site coordinators, experienced teachers, school principals, and superintendents. While each site pursued its own course for selecting its SVPDP teachers, overall the selection process was open and equitable. This is evident in the virtual absence of SVPDP teachers' complaints about antagonism or jealousy from their colleagues; if anything, other teachers were interested in and supportive of the SVPDP teachers' activities.

An influential individual in a district often could single-handedly shape and oversee the SVPDP teacher selection process. In Jefferson County, Brian Loney, the district social studies coordinator, serves as the SVPDP site coordinator. He selected teachers who, in addition to having successful careers in the classroom, had experience using the CCE materials. In Jefferson County, district policy requires that the principal approve all teacher involvement in extra projects, so Loney worked with the Jefferson County Public Schools deputy superintendent and used her support and influence to convince principals to allow teachers to participate. Thus, Loney strategically sought input and support from those individuals who could see to it that the program took off.

In Queens, information about the SVPDP teaching opportunities filtered down to teachers through various channels. The assistant superintendent of Community School District 30 sent an email message to teachers through their principals. Teachers and school staff were sent circulars describing the SVPDP program. The principal at one school approached teachers and asked them to participate. Teachers at three schools learned about the program through an assistant principal, while those at another school personally received the assistant superintendent's circular.[1] This process of open communication and outreach facilitated the selection process, so interested teachers were eager to participate.

Just as Loney turned to key district educators to implement the SVPDP in Jefferson County, the CCE solicited help from an experienced CCE teacher in Los Angeles, Valerie Sampson, who was able to organize and recruit teachers she thought would be interested in participating in the first year of the SVPDP. Sampson recruited four of the 17 teachers from her campus. The CCE's original SVPDP district contact for the Los Angeles Unified School District, Phyllis Gudouski, was instrumental in finding the other teachers.

As delineated by these examples, the SVPDP teacher selection process in most sites enlisted personnel with expertise to help steer and shape the participation of teachers in the program. While it is hard to account for the full impact the selection process may have on the program's implementation, it is clear that some sites have particularly benefited from their chosen selection process. For instance, Jefferson County chose its most successful teachers to launch the program. As exemplary teachers, they set the stage for future teacher performance in the SVPDP.

Jefferson County's strategy is not entirely free of drawbacks, however. Loney is concerned with how SVPDP performance levels and outcomes may change in future years when he includes less-skilled teachers in order to expand the program. He knows that he has avoided problems in the initial year of the SVPDP by choosing teachers who already know him and are acquainted with the rest of the district's social studies staff. The staff has established its credibility with these teachers and has worked very hard over the years to foster a trusting relationship with them.[2] This is less likely to be the case as the program grows larger and involves more teachers. Thus, as SVPDP schools face a variety of choices in how they initially select teachers to participate in the program, they

should consider carefully how well each approach fits with particular district characteristics and requirements.

Professional Experience and Training

As table 5.1 shows, few of the teachers involved in the SVPDP are in their first years of teaching.

Table 5.1
SVPDP Teachers' Years in the Classroom

	Number of Teacher Responses				
District	1-2 years	3-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15+ years
Brooklyn	1	1	3	2	1
Denver	0	1	0	2	4
Jefferson County	2	1	5	2	6
Los Angeles	3	3	2	4	3
Philadelphia	2	0	1	3	5
Queens	0	0	11	0	3
Wake County	1	0	0	0	1
All Districts	9	6	22	13	23

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

The majority of SVPDP teachers have at least five years of teaching experience; only 15 of the 73 teacher respondents to the November 1999 questionnaire have taught for less than five years. Moreover, the least experienced teachers are distributed across several districts, with one such teacher in each of the Brooklyn and Wake County districts, two in each of the Jefferson County and Philadelphia districts, and three in Los Angeles. As table 5.1 shows, each site has a combination of experienced teachers with ten or more years of classroom experience and less-experienced teachers with four years or less in the classroom.

This combination of experienced and less-experienced teachers has important implications for the overall implementation of the SVPDP. As the Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator notes, the level of teacher experience shapes expectations for their performance in implementing the program in the classroom.[3] Having experienced teachers work with their newer colleagues helps newer teachers benefit not only from the SVPDP teacher training sessions but also from interaction with senior teachers.

Table 5.2 shows the level of education attained by teachers participating in the first year of the SVPDP. All first-year SVPDP teachers responding to the November 1999 questionnaire have at least a baccalaureate degree, and well over half have earned a master's degree. In every SVPDP pilot site except Wake County, the SVPDP teacher respondents indicated that they have a master's degree or higher, and only Denver and Los Angeles have more teachers with baccalaureate degrees than with master's degrees. In some districts, SVPDP teacher qualifications exceed teacher qualifications in the

district as a whole; in Queens, for instance, every SVPDP teacher holds a master's degree.

Table 5.2
SVPDP Teachers' Highest Level of Education Attained

	Number of Teacher Responses		
District	Baccalaureate	Master's	Ph.D.
Brooklyn	2	5	1
Denver	5	2	0
Jefferson County	3	13	0
Los Angeles	12	2	1
Philadelphia	3	8	0
Queens	0	14	0
Wake County	2	0	0
All Districts	27	44	2

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Not surprisingly, as table 5.3 shows, most of the SVPDP teachers are certified in social studies, history, or related fields. Over 60 percent of all SVPDP teacher respondents have certifications to teach social studies, and close to 40 percent have certifications to teach history. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that all SVPDP sites have a majority of teachers with recognized ability to instruct in either social studies or history.

Table 5.3
SVPDP Teachers' Subject Areas of Certification

	Number of Teacher Responses					
District	Social Studies	History	Govt./Political Science	Geography	Economics	Psychology/ Sociology
Brooklyn	4	2	2	1	0	0
Denver	7	5	3	0	0	0
Jefferson County	5	4	2	5	5	1
Los Angeles	15	11	3	7	3	4
Philadelphia	5	2	1	1	1	2
Queens	8	4	2	3	2	0
Wake County	2	1	0	0	0	0
All Districts	46	29	13	17	11	7

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.
Note: Other responses included: Elementary Education (13 responses), Music (2), Bilingual Education (2), Administration, English (4), ESL, Common Branch (5), Special Education, Math (2), Counseling, Language Arts (2), Literature, Instructional II, Languages, Reading, Science, Physical Education.

The number of subject area certifications at each SVPDP site does not necessarily equal the number of SVPDP teachers, because several teachers have certifications in more than one subject area. In Brooklyn, for example, all SVPDP teachers are certified to teach in at least one subject area, and several teachers hold certification in multiple disciplines.

Jefferson County is the only first-year SVPDP district in which the majority of the SVPDP teachers hold certifications in subject areas outside of social studies and history. This reflects the fact that the Jefferson County teachers instruct students at the upper elementary level and are certified in elementary education rather than in social studies or history.[4]

Table 5.4 shows the primary postsecondary subjects of study for the SVPDP teachers.

Table 5.4
SVPDP Teachers' Primary Postsecondary Subjects of Study

District	Primary Postsecondary Subjects of Study
Brooklyn	Education (5), History (3), Psychology (2), Political Science, Law, Environmental Science
Denver	History (4), Social Studies (2), Elementary Education (2), Computer Education (2), Language Arts, Physical Education
Jefferson County	Elementary Education (5), Curriculum/Instruction (4), Technology (3), Music (2), Humanities (2), Psychology (2), Theater, Child Development, Child Psychology, Statistics, Social Studies, Reading, Human Development, English
Los Angeles	History (8), Social Studies (2), Education (2), Political Science (2), Speech Communications, Psychology, Liberal Studies, Anthropology, Sociology, Music, Counseling, English
Philadelphia	Social Studies (3), Elementary Education (3), History, Special Education, Reading, Psychology, Communications, Education, Multicultural Education
Queens	Social Studies (5), Bilingual Education (4), History (2), Administration (2), English (2), Law, Government, Science, Guidance, Elementary Education, Sociology, International Finance, Instructional Technology
Wake County	Social Studies (2), History

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.
Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of responses for each primary subject of study.

As with their areas of certification, most SVPDP teachers have academic training in a social studies discipline, except in Jefferson County, where training is concentrated in elementary education.

Background in Civics and Familiarity with CCE Materials

As table 5.5 shows, more than 80 percent of the first-year SVPDP teachers stated that their participation in the SVPDP marks the first time they have worked with the CCE.

Some districts have more teachers reporting CCE experience than others. In Jefferson County, 44 percent of the responding teachers have used CCE materials before, the highest level of the seven districts. Community School District 30 (Queens) and

Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), the only SVPDP pilot districts in which all SVPDP teachers report working with the CCE for the first time, are both in New York City. At each of these sites, however, the SVPDP site coordinator has an extensive background with the CCE. Nicole Williams (Brooklyn) and Debra Lesser (Queens) have worked with the CCE for years. Williams used CCE materials in the past, during her teaching days, while Lesser oversees CCE program competitions for New York City schools. Though Lesser is confident in her knowledge of the CCE programs, since none of the Queens SVPDP teachers have experience with the materials, she is trying not to push them too hard. She describes her approach as "not scaring teachers away."[5]

Table 5.5
SVPDP Teachers' Previous Association with the CCE

	Number of Teacher Responses	
District	First Time to Work with the CCE	Worked with the CCE Before
Brooklyn	8	0
Denver	5	2
Jefferson County	9	7
Los Angeles	12	3
Philadelphia	10	1
Queens	14	0
Wake County	1	1
All Districts	59	14

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Table 5.6 shows that close to 60 percent of all SVPDP teachers indicated that they do not have a background in civics.

Table 5.6
SVPDP Teachers' Background in Civics

	Number of Teacher Responses	
District	Background Includes Civics Courses, Civic Participation, Civic Education, etc.	No Civics Courses, Civic Participation, Civic Education, etc. in Background
Brooklyn	4	4
Denver	3	4
Jefferson County	8	8
Los Angeles	7	8
Philadelphia	2	9
Queens	5	9
Wake County	2	0
All Districts	31	42

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Although more than one-half of all SVPDP teacher respondents indicated they had no civics background, each first-year SVPDP site has at least some teachers with experience in civic education. Four of the seven pilot districts have more teachers participating

without a civics background than with one. In only two of these four sites, however, does the difference between the number of SVPDP teachers with a civics background differ from those without by more than one teacher.

Teacher experiences vary among those with a civics background. In Jefferson County, for example, eight such teachers reported experience that included Holocaust and diversity education programs offered by the Anti-Defamation League and the University of Denver, undergraduate course work in history and political science, in-service training, Young Ameritown, Kids Voting in-service training, and *We the People* teacher training workshops.[6]

Teachers as SVPDP Implementers

Teachers across all seven districts have similar general views of their role in the SVPDP, seeing themselves as the actual implementers of the program. The Brooklyn SVPDP teachers, for example, see their role as promoting civic virtue and responsibility in the classroom, as well as teaching social studies using civics materials that meet state and district standards.[7] The Philadelphia SVPDP teachers view themselves as the front-line implementers of the project.[8] The Los Angeles SVPDP teachers see their role as transmitting not only facts, but also the concepts behind laws and the source of power and authority.[9] The Jefferson County SVPDP teachers generally see themselves as dispensers of information, as models of good citizenship, and as people who have an obligation to teach students in the best possible way.[10] As a rule, violence prevention is, at best, a secondary concern for the first-year SVPDP teachers, in part because they believe that the CCE materials used in the SVPDP rarely address violence and violence prevention issues directly.

In all the pilot districts, the SVPDP teachers are aware that they have committed themselves to a program and, as such, are obliged to teach it as well as they can. The SVPDP teachers and other SVPDP officials in the districts are fully aware of all the teachers' obligations, however, including not only the social studies curriculum, but also curricula in all other subject areas and extracurricular activities. As a result, most of the SVPDP teachers believe they should have a certain amount of flexibility in deciding which parts of the SVPDP they choose to complete. Some teachers cope better than others with this problem. Jefferson County and Philadelphia SVPDP teachers, for example, do not seem bothered by the fact that they are not likely to complete all the SVPDP curricular materials. In the early months of the program (i.e., fall 1999), Denver SVPDP teachers, on the other hand, felt "overwhelmed" and did not see much hope for improvement.[11] In Los Angeles, external pressures have made it difficult for some SVPDP teachers to give serious attention to their SVPDP responsibilities.[12]

Some SVPDP teachers see the program as an opportunity to make connections in their districts. In Queens, for example, the SVPDP teachers refer to themselves as the "Queens team." They see the SVPDP as an opportunity to meet other teachers in the district and to share ideas with one another.[13] In all, as table 5.7 shows, over 40 percent of the first-year SVPDP teachers reported having contact with other SVPDP teachers at

least five times per month. In some districts, like Jefferson County, the fact that there is only one SVPDP teacher in most of the participating district schools explains the relatively low rates of interaction in that district.

Table 5.7
SVPDP Teachers' Interactions with Other SVPDP Teachers

	Number of Teacher Responses						
	Contacts per Month with other SVPDP Teachers						
District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7 or More
Brooklyn	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Denver	0	2	0	1	0	0	1
Jefferson County	3	5	1	1	0	1	5
Los Angeles	0	1	3	2	2	0	5
Philadelphia	0	1	0	0	4	1	2
Queens	2	0	1	2	1	1	2
Wake County	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
All Districts	5	10	7	6	8	4	16

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

The SVPDP teachers connected with one another in a variety of ways, although the SVPDP teacher training sessions are the most common forum, followed by classroom visits and faculty meetings. Table 5.8 shows how the SVPDP teachers report interacting with one another.

Table 5.8
Forms of Interaction among SVPDP Teachers

	Number of Teacher Responses						
District	Memos	Telephone	Email	Teacher Training	Classroom Visits	Faculty Meetings	Other
Brooklyn	0	2	0	1	1	2	0
Denver	0	2	0	3	1	1	1
Jefferson County	3	4	6	11	2	1	5
Los Angeles	3	0	0	8	5	7	4
Philadelphia	0	1	0	2	3	3	5
Queens	0	4	0	2	4	3	3
Wake County	0	0	0	3	1	0	2
All Districts	6	13	6	30	17	17	20

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

Table 5.9 shows that SVPDP teachers in most pilot districts report being pleased with the quality of their interactions with other teachers participating in the program, regardless of where or how often it occurs

Table 5.9
Quality of Interaction among SVPDP Teachers

District	Average Response on a Scale of 1 (Not Helpful) to 7 (Very Helpful)
Brooklyn	6.0
Denver	3.8
Jefferson County	5.6
Los Angeles	5.9
Philadelphia	4.9
Queens	6.0
Wake County	5.0
All Districts	5.3

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

In some districts, the SVPDP teachers' role as implementers includes making connections with the larger community, especially parents. In Philadelphia, for instance, Melvin Garrison, district social studies coordinator and SVPDP district contact, has encouraged teachers to ask cluster leaders, parents, secretaries, principals, community ward leaders, librarians, and even the owner of the local deli to judge the classroom *We the People* competition. This has been an excellent way to encourage community participation in the SVPDP, and thus raise support for the program in future years.[14] In other districts, the outreach efforts to the community are initiated by school personnel other than the teachers.

While the SVPDP teachers realize the importance of integrating the SVPDP (i.e., the CCE) materials into their own lesson plans, they appear to be less aware of the full SVPDP research component (see chapter 4).[15] They do not see themselves as implementers of a *research* project. This is particularly evident in SVPDP teacher attitudes toward, and confusion about, the student attitudinal pretest and posttest. If the SVPDP teachers had a better understanding of the program's research objectives, they might be more careful about how they administer the student attitudinal tests. Many SVPDP teachers are unsure about the purpose of the tests; some expressed their students' discomfort with the test administration. In one SVPDP class, a teacher excused a student from taking the SVPDP test because of the student's anxiety over confidentiality issues.[16] Thus, while SVPDP teachers universally describe themselves as implementers of the program, their definition of what they are implementing may differ from that of the program originally designed.

Teachers' Perceptions of the SVPDP

The SVPDP teachers generally are happy with the program's curricular materials and with the *theory* behind the program. The teachers approve of its focus on citizenship, and most think the SVPDP has the potential to decrease school violence. At the same time, the majority do not see violence prevention as the primary focus of the program, perhaps because the program materials rarely discuss violence prevention directly. Table 5.10 summarizes the SVPDP teachers' perceptions of the goals of the program. The responses show a greater emphasis on civic education in general than on violence prevention.

Table 5.10
SVPDP Teachers' Perceptions of the Program Goals

Teachers' Responses

- To teach students to become good or better citizens
- To help students become productive members of society
- To reduce violence in schools and in our communities
- To enhance our curriculum
- To teach students civic education
- To teach students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens
- To help students so that they will react responsibly to problems and will do "the right thing"
- To train teachers to teach civic education
- To teach students civic virtue and individual responsibility
- To nurture students to become more sociable and responsible
- To increase student awareness of civic matters and how our laws affect our citizens
- To change students' attitudes
- To help students become more tolerant
- To give students' a sense of how they fit into the current system
- To show students how government works
- To teach students to respect the law
- To gather information to test if civics education reduces school violence and increases positive student behavior
- To foster within students a sense of responsibility to their communities
- To teach students to address conflict through discussion, not just action
- To prepare students for adulthood
- To teach students the importance of participating in government
- To give students respect for authority
- To help students realize that everyone can do something to contribute to our society
- To teach American youth the basic principles of American law
- To empower students through knowledge
- To stop current school violence and to prevent future violence
- To help youth realize the negative consequences of violence
- To teach principles of morality and self-awareness
- To teach students conflict resolution and violence prevention
- To help young people solve problems, handle situations, and work out conflicts in a nonviolent manner
- To improve students' knowledge of the U.S. Constitution
- To educate students about power and authority
- To instill civic pride in students
- To develop critical thinking in students
- To improve students' social skills

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Even though they express concerns that the CCE's goals for the program may be unreachable, the SVPDP teachers are enthusiastic about the program and believe that it has the potential to teach vital skills.[17] This belief in the goals of the SVPDP is the reason many of the teachers offer for participating.

Interestingly, despite the fact that the SVPDP teachers tend to emphasize civic education over violence prevention, they generally express little confusion about SVPDP goals. As table 5.11 shows, with the exception of Denver, SVPDP teachers in the pilot districts reported that, on average, they are quite confident about their understanding of the SVPDP goals.

Table 5.11
SVPDP Teachers' Understanding of the Program Goals

District	Average Response on a Scale of 1 (Not at All Clear about Goals) to 7 (Very Clearly Understand Goals)
Brooklyn	5.1
Denver	3.9
Jefferson County	5.5
Los Angeles	5.3
Philadelphia	5.3
Queens	5.5
Wake County	5.0
All Districts	5.1

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Program teachers see real benefits in using the SVPDP to teach citizenship skills. One, for example, said that because her students are on the "threshold of adulthood," they need to learn about how to vote and act as responsible citizens, and she thinks the SVPDP provides this information.[18] Another noted that her students are very excited about the focus on responsible citizenship in the SVPDP materials, something from which she thinks they benefit.[19] Another thinks that the hands-on learning involved in the SVPDP *We the People* mock congressional hearing will really demonstrate to her students how the U.S. Constitution works.[20] Many SVPDP teachers reported to the researchers that the "real world" applications of the program are its biggest virtue. Some teachers like the violence prevention elements of the program, but violence prevention generally seems to take a back seat to strengthening citizenship. The view of one Jefferson County SVPDP teacher is typical: she sees the goal of the program as good citizenship; violence prevention is a nice by-product.[21]

The program's curricular materials are another attraction for the SVPDP teachers. Some teachers have used CCE materials and programs before, but, for many, receiving the free books is extremely important. The teachers generally see the books as "kid friendly," and they report that students like the CCE texts as well. One teacher even stated, "My kids don't want to go back to other classes."[22] The SVPDP materials' focus on problem solving and collaborative learning also pleases the teachers.

While the teachers like the goal of the SVPDP and see the program as valuable and important, and while they appreciate the free CCE books, a few elements of the first-year SVPDP implementation have been problematic. SVPDP teachers' objections to the program hinge largely on how it makes it harder for them to effectively accomplish the already difficult job of educating children in a culture and school system that places exceedingly heavy demands on them. Their objections center neither on the SVPDP itself nor on its basic premise. Instead, the SVPDP teachers, who must balance it with numerous conflicting demands, believe that the way in which the program has been implemented often makes their balancing act more difficult than usual. It should be noted, however, that when the SVPDP site coordinators or district social studies

coordinators provide teachers with assistance in incorporating the CCE materials into their existing lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm about participating in SVPDP improves.

During the SVPDP's first year, many teachers felt overwhelmed by the scope of SVPDP content and the number of projects they were expected to complete in a single school year. Most SVPDP participants suggested that the *We The People* book, the *Foundations of Democracy* book, and the *Project Citizen* curriculum, together with two culminating activities, were a great deal of additional material to mix in with the regular curriculum.[23] Finishing the SVPDP lessons and still fulfilling their obligations to teach the district curriculum, conducting other special projects, and giving sufficient attention to standardized assessments create a difficult challenge for many teachers.

Relations with the CCE have also been a problem for some SVPDP teachers during the first year of the program. For example, in October 1999 the CCE sent the teachers an SVPDP curriculum outline checklist (see appendix D for both the Level II and the Level I checklists), curriculum integration outline (see appendix E), and time line, with the positive intention of helping to facilitate SVPDP implementation. Some SVPDP teachers, however, interpreted the curriculum outline checklist as adding to the program requirements; some even viewed the CCE as being overly demanding. The SVPDP culminating activities are another area of concern. Many SVPDP teachers believe that the CCE is insufficiently aware of and concerned about the instructional challenges that they, as teachers, already face, and that the CCE is, as a result, too insistent upon including two culminating activities in the SVPDP. Finally, a few SVPDP teachers contend that the CCE has not followed through on commitments it made about materials, assistance, and the June 2000 SVPDP planning meeting in California. To their credit, SVPDP site coordinators recognize these concerns, and many have used the teacher training workshops as opportunities to provide support and encouragement to teachers and to distribute accurate information about the program.

Despite these problems, SVPDP teachers remain very enthusiastic about the SVPDP and its goals. As one Denver teacher stated, "I think it's something our students need."[24] Table 5.12 shows the number of SVPDP teacher respondents interested in participating in the SVPDP again, by levels of willingness.

Table 5.12 shows clearly that an overwhelming number of first-year SVPDP teachers are very willing to participate in the program again. Approximately 75 percent of the teachers responded in this way, replying with a score of 5, 6, or 7 (highest) to the survey question. Only 4 of the 55 SVPDP teacher respondents indicated a low willingness to participate in the program again (i.e., reported a score below 4). This represents an exceptionally high level of satisfaction with the SVPDP.

Thus, even though a number of the SVPDP teachers voiced concerns about the SVPDP and its implementation, such concerns have not been overwhelming in the program's first year. As affirmed in table 5.12, only a few SVPDP teachers reported that their experience in the first year of the program would discourage their continued involvement. Indeed, in almost every district, more teachers said they would be "very willing" to participate again (the highest possible level of willingness) than reported any other level

of willingness. Clearly, then, when taken as a whole, teacher perceptions of the SVPDP are enthusiastically positive.

Table 5.12
SVPDP Teachers' Willingness to Participate Again in the SVPDP

	Number of Teacher Responses on a Scale of 1 (Not Willing) to 7 (Very Willing)						
District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Brooklyn	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Denver	0	0	0	2	0	0	1
Jefferson County	1	0	0	4	0	4	8
Los Angeles	0	1	1	2	3	2	4
Philadelphia	0	0	0	1	0	1	5
Queens	0	1	0	0	1	3	4
Wake County	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
All Districts	1	2	1	10	4	11	26

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

Obstacles for Teachers in SVPDP Implementation

Not all first-year SVPDP teachers have been equally able to fulfill their role as implementers of the program. In some cases, particular circumstances affecting individual teachers have posed obstacles. In others, conditions in the district as a whole have been the cause. Time constraints, curriculum integration, teacher confidence, and special factors all have been significant challenges that teachers have faced in implementing the SVPDP.

Time Constraints

Time constraints appear to be the most formidable obstacle blocking SVPDP implementation by participating teachers. Though there is evidence of a variety of attitudes among SVPDP schools and teachers, the demands of completing both the regular curriculum and the SVPDP culminating activities seem to have raised the level of SVPDP teachers' anxiety about the program.

First of all, SVPDP implementation does not occur in the same way at the same time in each participating classroom. In Brooklyn, for example, teachers use only those CCE materials for which they feel they have time—and some teachers believe they have more time than others. By November 1999, for example, one Brooklyn SVPDP teacher had completed the first seven lessons in *Foundations of Democracy* and was moving into *We the People*, while others had barely started using the program's materials. In the same way, at the time of one researcher's December 1999 visit to Jefferson County, one SVPDP teacher had worked through all the SVPDP materials except for *Project Citizen*, while most of the other teachers in that district were not planning to do the *We the People* mock congressional hearing until February 2000.[25]

While many SVPDP teachers do not feel overwhelmed by the program materials, a few teachers at each district site believe that the program is too long.[26] Teachers are often frustrated, knowing they will not have time to finish the program because there is simply too much material to cover when the SVPDP lessons are integrated into regular class materials. Teachers' different reactions to frustration about the length of the program can lead to variations among them in the speed with which they implement the SVPDP. According to the Wake County site coordinator, for instance, some SVPDP teachers are doing only a minimum number of SVPDP lessons, while others are meeting all program expectations, including teaching *Project Citizen*, *We the People*, and *Foundations of Democracy*, in addition to completing both culminating activities. Some SVPDP teachers do not use *Foundations of Democracy* because they believe it is too difficult, and it is not covered on the civic knowledge posttest. The Wake County site coordinator sees this as unfortunate, because *Foundations of Democracy* has the potential to have a significant impact on students' attitudes.[27]

The SVPDP culminating activities present particular timing problems. At some pilot sites, the SVPDP teachers did not initially understand that both culminating projects are expected to be completed, despite having been told this at teacher training workshops. Such a lack of understanding suggests a communication problem among the CCE, the site coordinators, and the teachers. Some SVPDP teachers expressed the belief that they could not possibly complete both the *We the People* and the *Project Citizen* culminating activities. One teacher, attempting to be diplomatic about his concerns, said, "I don't know exactly how to say this, but I don't think I can get both done."[28]

As a specific example, resistance to the SVPDP culminating activities was particularly evident among the Los Angeles teachers in fall 1999. When they learned in November 1999 about the CCE's expectation that all SVPDP classrooms would conduct a *We the People* mock congressional hearing, they became agitated, especially after realizing that the CCE expected this to be completed by February 2000. They did not think it would be possible to prepare their students for the culminating activity, nor did they feel they had the time to arrange such an activity. The SVPDP teachers were reassured, however, when the Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator explained that they should feel free to do what they could, even if that meant having small hearings in their classrooms.[29] By the fourth Los Angeles SVPDP teacher training workshop in February 2000, none of the SVPDP teachers had held the mock congressional hearing, and many expressed their unwillingness to do any culminating activity at all for the year. By the end of the day, however, the SVPDP site coordinator had succeeded in convincing the teachers that they could devote at least a little time to organizing congressional hearings, even if only on a small scale. Indeed, of the 14 teachers present at the training workshop, all but two left the session inspired and willing to have their students participate in a congressional hearing. The other two were unwilling to commit students' time, but promised to volunteer in the organizing or judging of the hearings conducted by other teachers.[30]

Timing can be a problem, not only for the SVPDP curricular materials as a whole, but also for individual lessons. These activities are time-consuming, and many SVPDP teachers find it difficult to know how much to allot to one activity, and when to move on

to the next one. Teachers throughout the sites reported that their students' love of discussing the SVPDP materials at length was in fact a mixed blessing, because it created serious time shortages. Teachers, in general, seemed unable to devote as much time to the SVPDP in the classroom as they would like, although they also recognized that student learning is occurring during that classroom time. (See chapter 6 for a more in-depth discussion of this topic.)

In addition to having inadequate classroom time for the SVPDP, program teachers also expressed frustration with the SVPDP curriculum outline checklist mailed to them by the CCE in October 1999. Some SVPDP teachers suggested to the researchers that not all the lessons on the checklist are integral to the SVPDP, and wondered whether some should be removed in the interest of saving time. Other teachers felt that, as professionals, they should have the option to use their judgment throughout the pilot implementation of SVPDP, since they are closest to the actual implementation of the program. The believe, however, that the CCE checklist precludes this option.[31] Some SVPDP teachers expressed concern that the extensive number of activities suggested on the checklist might leave their students "flat and burned out."[32] One teacher, on the other hand, worried that teachers did not receive this checklist until the end of October.[33] Still another teacher concluded simply that "it's just too much."[34] Without a doubt, the pressures of classroom and instructional time are foremost on the minds of these teachers.

Like the Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator's efforts on the culminating activities, the Queens site coordinator attempted to calm her teachers' anxiety about the October checklist. Her strategy was to assure the SVPDP teachers that the checklist was simply a guide to all possible areas they might cover—she told them not to panic if they could not finish all of the lessons.[35] She instructed them to use it simply to track what they do and do not finish.[36] As the researchers observed during their two visits to the district, however, the SVPDP teachers in Queens have been slow to implement the program, falling well behind the CCE time line.[37] There is little doubt, nevertheless, that the Queens teachers view the October time line as inconsistent with their own time constraints.

Thus, time constraints appear to have been a major source of difficulty for teachers in implementing the SVPDP during its first year. Nevertheless, the Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator's attempt to address teachers' concerns about this issue is important. That example suggests that effective communication about the expectations and requirements of the SVPDP can go a long way toward alleviating teacher anxiety about the program activities. Although time constraints seem to pose constant challenges in education, the failure to address SVPDP teachers' concerns about time problems may lead to diminished results from the program. What is clear is that teachers' perceptions of their time constraints influenced the manner in which they implemented the SVPDP curriculum during 1999–2000.

Curriculum Integration

The difficulties of implementing the SVPDP while continuing to fulfill the instructional requirements of districts' regular curricula have posed a challenge for the SVPDP

teachers and, at times, have been a source of anxiety. (See chapter 6 for a more in-depth discussion of this topic.)

All seven districts have experienced at least minor, and sometimes major, difficulties infusing the SVPDP materials and concepts into what they are already obliged to teach. In general, SVPDP teachers note two central and important issues in curriculum integration: flexibility and guidance. Teachers prefer to have flexibility in integrating the SVPDP into their regular curricula, so that they themselves might choose how and when to introduce its materials. At the same time, they clearly have sought additional guidance from their site coordinators, colleagues, and other district officials in how to meet both the SVPDP and regular curricular requirements. Fulfilling both objectives is a delicate balancing act. Ultimately, the *combination* of clear guidance *and* flexibility in the integration and implementation of the SVPDP can best reduce the SVPDP teachers' frustrations.

Standards-based education reform and the resulting accountability measures imposed on districts and schools pose a particularly vexing challenge for teachers in integrating the SVPDP into their regular curricula. In Jefferson County, for example, the SVPDP teachers' freedom is limited by a districtwide priority emphasis on literacy, which stems from new high-stakes assessment tests. To make these tests even more pressure-filled, a recent funding increase in the district is tied to accountability measures, particularly test scores; thus, many Jefferson County teachers feel pressure to raise students' test scores so that their schools will become eligible for additional tax dollars.[38] The SVPDP teachers in Los Angeles have similar difficulties; they complain that new California state standards are making it harder for teachers to teach. Teachers experience considerable pressure to concentrate on raising their students' achievement test scores, instead of teaching concepts and skills that teachers consider to be important.[39] Since standardized tests rarely cover civics material, teachers in states with high-stakes tests face additional problems in integrating the SVPDP materials into the regular curriculum.

Teacher Confidence

Another factor that can affect the implementation of the SVPDP is the general confidence level of an individual SVPDP teacher or group of teachers about the program. In some cases, teachers lack confidence because they are insufficiently familiar with civics in general and with CCE materials in particular. The Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator speculates that some SVPDP teachers may be reluctant to participate in mock congressional hearings because they feel insecure about their own knowledge of history, and thus do not believe they can coach their students effectively.[40] One Los Angeles SVPDP teacher concurs, suggesting that those teachers who are stressed out about the curriculum "do not know their stuff."[41] The SVPDP site evaluator in Jefferson County also attributes different confidence levels to different amounts of teaching experience among the SVPDP teachers. This is particularly apparent, he suggests, in the ways that teachers make decisions about when and what to cut from the SVPDP curricular materials when time is tight. He notes that one of the most successful SVPDP teachers has taught long enough to know what is important for students, and has the self-

confidence to make decisions. She is also one of the few SVPDP teachers he has observed in Jefferson County who has worked with the CCE materials before, which also increases her confidence level.[42]

Not all SVPDP teachers feel restricted by their lack of familiarity with the SVPDP materials, however. For example, one Denver teacher noted, "I'm not afraid to let them know that I am learning with them."[43] This statement suggests that, while familiarity with the CCE materials and a background in civics are closely associated with confidence in SVPDP implementation, their absence does not preclude effectively doing so. Certainly, though, experience with civic education in general and with CCE materials in particular, is helpful in effectively carrying out the SVPDP.

Indeed, toward the end of the first year, many teachers' apprehension subsided as they used, and became familiar with, the SVPDP materials. In Wake County, for instance, teachers initially were not eager to undertake the *Project Citizen* activity. "[B]ut in the end," according to the Wake County SVPDP site coordinator, "it was the favorite curriculum and very beneficial to the students."[44] Similarly, in Los Angeles, many teachers rethought their early reluctance toward incorporating new teaching methods. The SVPDP site coordinator there noted that, by May, some teachers had "come around," and had become much more open to the use of cooperative learning techniques. According to her, those teachers who had been closed to outside ideas are now more accepting of the approach that the SVPDP encourages.[45]

As noted, coping with the time constraints and curriculum integration challenges associated with implementing the SVPDP has been difficult for some SVPDP teachers. Teacher confidence can be important in dealing with these constraints. The Jefferson County SVPDP site evaluator has made a special point of investigating why very experienced teachers can do a good job in implementing the program, while others, such as one cluster of young teachers at a single school, have more difficulty doing so.[46] He notes the example of one particular SVPDP teacher in Jefferson County. This experienced teacher teaches fifth grade, where the curriculum on the period from 1492 to the American Revolution is more difficult to fit with the SVPDP materials than the sixth-grade curriculum that other Jefferson County SVPDP teachers are using. Nevertheless, this teacher is able to continue using the SVPDP (i.e., the CCE) materials, because she is personally committed to them and has been using them for two years. She has shortened the regular unit on explorers to make the SVPDP materials fit, and is not unhappy about that decision. She acknowledges that the SVPDP requires a huge time commitment, but she says, "You have to make choices."[47] This teacher, unlike some of her SVPDP colleagues, has both the experience and the confidence that allow her to make such choices with relative ease.

Thus, although teacher confidence may grow out of any combination of familiarity with the CCE materials and civics to years of classroom experience, it is likely that confidence levels relate directly to being able to effectively implement the SVPDP. Teachers who are less apprehensive about the program spend less time worrying and more time focusing on how to make the program a success in their classrooms. Mixing experienced

SVPDP teachers with less experienced colleagues may be one strategy for improving the overall confidence level of any given district group of SVPDP teachers.

Special Obstacles

A number of other factors at individual schools have made it difficult for teachers to implement the SVPDP. For instance, some teachers experience conflicts between the demands of the SVPDP and other special programs they are required to carry out. In Denver, for example, some SVPDP teachers work extensively with students on National History Day projects, and one is even serving as the National History Day coordinator for her school. One teacher said that "this is virtually impossible," and another felt "great anxiety" about finishing the culminating activity.[48] One Denver teacher suggested that if she had known how great the demands of both the National History Day and the SVPDP would be, "I never would have done this [SVPDP]."[49] In Queens, one teacher was asked to participate in a special arts program that takes two of her four class periods per week. She said she felt she could not fit the SVPDP materials into her regular curriculum and finish the arts program at the same time.[50]

More difficulties can arise. For example, non-SVPDP factors, such as large class size, teacher shortages, and building problems at Pepper Middle School, where a flood destroyed almost all the school's textbooks, have caused some SVPDP teachers in Philadelphia to have a bumpy transition in implementing the CCE curricular materials.[51] Similarly, SVPDP teachers in Wake County missed a great deal of class time because of school closings; the district experienced both a hurricane and the worst snowstorm in North Carolina history during the 1999–2000 school year.[52]

Implementation of the SVPDP in Sun Valley Middle School in Los Angeles has been slowed by its multi-track, year-round schedule. Because of this policy, the SVPDP teachers at Sun Valley feel more pressed for time than other teachers might. Teachers on the track that returned from break in October 1999, for instance, have considerably less time to familiarize themselves with CCE materials than do those who have used the materials since August or September, and the former are stressed about having to play the catch-up game. Also, the SVPDP teachers say that, just as students are firing up and getting into the lessons, they must stop instruction for a two-month break, and the students' energy is gone upon their return. There is a question, however, whether the SVPDP implementation problems at Sun Valley are due more to low teacher confidence or to scheduling problems.[53]

Serving the needs of students with poor English language skills is an additional challenge faced by some SVPDP teachers. In Queens, for example, a significant SVPDP implementation dilemma at the Academy for New Americans hinges on the question of whether to use an English language text in an English Language Learners (ELL) or bilingual classroom, or whether, as some teachers have suggested, to translate SVPDP materials and tests into Spanish, in particular the *Foundations of Democracy* book.[54] Similarly, some SVPDP teachers in Los Angeles (a district in which 45 percent of the students have limited or no English skills) explained that one reason for their slow implementation of the SVPDP is the English language limitation of their students.[55]

Because the vocabulary of the SVPDP materials is often too difficult for those learning English or reading at a lower reading level, some students are not able to understand the civics concepts as quickly as others. When this occurs, the SVPDP teachers have found it helpful for their students to use the lower-level CCE materials. Indeed, the researchers have found that six of the Sun Valley teachers use the Level I CCE materials designed for elementary school students, in preference to the Level II CCE materials designed for middle school students and used generally in the SVPDP classrooms.[56] In Brooklyn, the SVPDP teachers also use the lower-level CCE materials as they see fit. The availability of these two levels of CCE materials enables teachers to meet the needs of those students who are still mastering English.

Issues of Teacher Autonomy

The issue of teacher autonomy arose repeatedly in researchers' discussions with the SVPDP participants. Closely related to this is the question of who is the ultimate authority to whom the teachers must answer. Given the implementation obstacles discussed in the previous section, the SVPDP teachers and other participants often need to adjust the way in which they carry out the program. Thus, decisions among participants about how to address the twin questions of autonomy and authority have significantly shaped the first-year implementation of the SVPDP.

The School District as Authority

The SVPDP site coordinators in the pilot districts told teachers that in general they should decide for themselves what elements of the SVPDP to finish and what to cut from the program; in some cases, however, this directive left the teachers confused. If teachers do not see the site coordinator as having the power to grant them such autonomy, they feel constrained in their decision making.

In some districts, the SVPDP teachers view the SVPDP site coordinators, or other SVPDP personnel, as legitimate sources of authority. In Jefferson County, for example, when the site coordinator tells teachers to do what they can to complete the SVPDP and the district social studies curriculum, they feel confident in cutting some of the district's required curriculum because the SVPDP site coordinator also is the district social studies coordinator. He can say with some authority that it is acceptable to cut the district curriculum. Jefferson County's district staff neither expect every participating SVPDP teacher to finish the entire program, nor seem overly worried about people falling behind. The staff trusts the teachers and knows that if a teacher must drop something, it will be for a good reason. The teachers seem confident, too. One participating teacher appreciates that no one in the SVPDP has said, "You *will* do this, then this." She likes it that the program is not totally prescribed and that "it lets us do what we know how to do, which is teach kids."[57]

Similarly, when Nancy Cope, Wake County's district social studies coordinator and the SVPDP site contact (and also a former social studies teacher in the district), says that teachers must decide on their own what material to include or not include, the teachers

take her seriously. As in the Jefferson County case, Cope's dual role as SVPDP advocate and district official makes her a reliable authority for teachers.[58]

In some Jefferson County schools, however, the SVPDP site coordinator's power as a district official is limited. Jefferson County uses a site-based management system, and while most principals have been flexible about letting teachers use additional time for the SVPDP, at some schools teachers report being allowed to spend only a few hours per week on social studies. In these cases, the schools' principals stress math and reading above all else, because these are the subjects on which students are tested in high-stakes state assessments. The SVPDP site coordinator and teachers acknowledge that, in these cases, the teachers' freedom to decide how much time to spend on the SVPDP is strictly limited, and any autonomy the site coordinator tries to grant to teachers is somewhat illusory.[59]

Interestingly, teacher confidence plays an important role in determining how free the SVPDP teachers actually feel about exercising the autonomy given to them by the SVPDP site coordinators. Many teachers in Jefferson County, for example, are very confident about the SVPDP and are making the most of what freedom they have and of situations in the district that give them room to maneuver. Because the social studies curriculum is not completely written out, and official lesson plans are not yet in place, teachers have more flexibility now than they might in a few years once the curriculum is set. Because time is tight for Jefferson County teachers, they realize that they will not get through all the SVPDP materials, so some of them, on an individual basis, are making decisions about what to cut. From what the researchers saw, many teachers are as inclined to cut from the district curriculum as from CCE material, but it is unclear how long they will be able to do this. Jefferson County teachers also have some additional room to maneuver because they teach in an elementary classroom setting in which they can integrate the SVPDP lessons throughout the school day; this is something that teachers in the other pilot districts can rarely do.[60]

SVPDP teachers in Brooklyn also can be flexible in choosing how to use CCE materials in their classrooms. The fact that Community School District 23 (Brooklyn) created outlined lessons that SVPDP teachers could use to adapt their own lesson plans seems to have given these teachers some freedom. Ultimately, however, the district superintendent in Brooklyn can force teachers to follow guidelines that might preclude effectively implementing the SVPDP. One Brooklyn SVPDP teacher found a creative way to introduce the SVPDP materials to her classroom: she had her students read from their CCE books during reading time instead of from the usual Basal reader. She had to stop this practice, however, when the Community School District 23 superintendent instructed all teachers to use only the standard Basal reader during class reading time. It is not clear to the researchers whether the other teachers had the same problem.

In Philadelphia, Melvin Garrison's social studies coordinator position within the school district and his long-term relationships with some of the teachers make him a reliable authority for the SVPDP group. It was difficult for the researchers to determine exactly how strictly the Philadelphia teachers are adhering to the SVPDP curricular materials. It

appears that Garrison told them that they were expected to implement all of *We the People*, *Project Citizen*, and *Foundations of Democracy*. However, Garrison mentioned that he does not think the teachers need to finish everything, that sticking to a time line is not especially important, and that he is looking for quality, not quantity, in instruction.[61] The Philadelphia SVPDP teachers seem confident with Garrison's guidance; if he says they need not complete the entire SVPDP, then they are comfortable accepting this.

The SVPDP site coordinator in Queens is also a district employee. Outside of the *We the People* mock congressional hearing, the *Project Citizen* culminating activity, the teacher training workshops, and the SVPDP evaluation, all of which she considers necessary for the success of the SVPDP, she has granted her teachers a fair amount of flexibility.[62] At least one Queens SVPDP teacher has had discussions with her principal about strictly adhering to the district's curriculum guidelines and using the SVPDP materials to meet those requirements. The site coordinator commented to the researchers that principals should be aware of the SVPDP materials and any related teacher correspondence and activity: she copies the principals when sending information to the SVPDP teachers. She also said that she would pay special visits to the principals, if necessary, in an effort to smooth things out.[63] The fact that the site coordinator is also a district employee definitely enhances her authority with both principals and teachers in resolving difficulties.

In Los Angeles, the SVPDP site coordinator has repeatedly told teachers to do what they can in terms of completing the SVPDP materials. She told them not to worry about the lessons time line that the CCE gave them, and to teach what they can. The teachers have taken her advice to teach those lessons that they feel are appropriate and manageable, but different conditions at the two Los Angeles SVPDP schools affect how much autonomy teachers feel they really have. For example, the SVPDP teachers at Sun Valley feel much more pressure than those at Mulholland, because Sun Valley has one of the lowest student performance rates in the state and there is great pressure for its teachers to increase student test scores. Sun Valley teachers feel they do not have the time to teach both the regular curriculum and the SVPDP materials. In addition, because of their English language limitations, some Sun Valley students are not able to progress as quickly as those from Mulholland.[64]

Other issues also have negatively affected the Los Angeles SVPDP teachers. Morale in the district has been low because of bad publicity and upheaval surrounding a controversial superintendent and a contentious school board. The SVPDP teachers, and many school administrators, expressed to the researchers their concern at the resulting lack of leadership and clear vision. One district administrator said, "If you talk to the principals at the schools, they pretty much don't know what curriculum they're supposed to be using."[65] Problems related to the district's authority over teachers thus can arise not only over conflicts between district and SVPDP goals, but also out of confusion within the district itself. Under such circumstances, teachers' hesitancy in exercising autonomy in curriculum decisions is hardly surprising.

In most of the first-year pilot districts, the SVPDP site coordinators use their authority to encourage teachers to be flexible with the program and to do the best they can to implement the CCE lessons in their classrooms. Ultimately, however, teachers are free to follow this advice only up to the point that they confront the guidelines mandated by district sources of authority (i.e., superintendents and principals) to whom they are primarily accountable. In a sense, the SVPDP teachers merge their personal knowledge of district authority with the guidance provided by SVPDP site coordinators, and arrive at their own understanding of how they may proceed to implement the program in their classrooms. For this reason, any individual decisions made by SVPDP teachers can affect the consistency and comprehensiveness of the SVPDP implementation.

The CCE as Authority

The SVPDP teachers' perceptions of the CCE and its authority over them also influence how they carry out the program. Their problems with the CCE during the first year of the program have included issues of communication, negative reactions to the curriculum outline checklist sent out by the CCE in October 1999, and distress over perceived changes in implementation plans and requirements during the year.

One source of dissatisfaction is a perception by some SVPDP teachers that the CCE (including its district SVPDP site coordinators) did not fully and accurately let them know, at the start of the 1999–2000 school year, what it expected from them. Although the teachers *were told* by the CCE during the first teacher training workshop that they would be expected to complete all the SVPDP curricular materials, including both culminating activities, in some pilot districts not all teachers *were aware* of program expectations. In the view of some of the teachers, the CCE switched program requirements in midstream, making integration of the SVPDP materials into the regular curriculum more difficult. Speaking to how teachers perceive these "new" SVPDP expectations, one Wake County SVPDP teacher said that the CCE stipend paid to teachers to participate in the program is insufficient, because "I had been told that [the SVPDP] would go with the [district] curriculum. Now, we are told we have to do this, and we have to do that."[66] Other SVPDP teachers are confused by conflicting statements they reported receiving from CCE staff in California, and from the SVPDP site coordinators, who serve as the CCE representatives in the districts. The teachers see implementation instructions as coming not only directly from the CCE but also from the SVPDP site coordinator, site evaluator, and district social studies coordinator. The teachers do not know which instructions to take seriously, and at times are confused by apparently conflicting guidance. Some SVPDP teachers have taken advantage of this situation to make their own decisions about implementing the program, while others are simply paralyzed.

Also of concern to the SVPDP teachers was the checklist sent to them by the CCE in October 1999; they perceive it as a limit on their autonomy. One Los Angeles SVPDP teacher commented that it is important for teachers to have a sense of freedom and to be able to do what they feel is possible. He feels that the checklist is daunting and overbearing and that, as professionals, teachers need the option of using their professional

judgment throughout their implementation of the SVPDP.[67] A Wake County teacher was even more blunt, saying that he believes it was inappropriate for the CCE to have sent teachers this checklist, because "I don't feel like I should be accountable to [the CCE]."[68]

Some SVPDP teachers are unclear about how to interpret the SVPDP site coordinator position, especially in terms of whether the site coordinator is primarily a CCE authority figure or a district authority figure. In Los Angeles, for example, the SVPDP teachers expressed mixed perceptions about the role of the SVPDP site coordinator. Some think of her as the "CCE person," someone who is responsible for making sure that the teachers teach CCE materials and organize the culminating activities.[69] On the other hand, the Los Angeles site coordinator herself has emphasized to the SVPDP teachers that she does not work for the CCE and that Rosen is not her boss. She has a contract with the CCE to organize the SVPDP teacher training workshops and to facilitate the district's SVPDP implementation process. She wants the teachers to know that she is on their side, providing support whenever and wherever she can.[70]

It would seem, then, that at least some of the first-year SVPDP teachers are confused about their autonomy *vis-à-vis* the CCE staff, their SVPDP site coordinators, and their district officials. They are uncertain about the authority of the CCE due to the conflicting signals that they perceive they have received. Consequently, clarifying the role of the CCE and the SVPDP site coordinators relative to the SVPDP teachers should be an important early step in future years of the SVPDP.

Clearly, autonomy is important for the SVPDP teachers. Given the constant demands under which teachers operate in all school districts, they often find themselves hard-pressed to implement fully every lesson in the SVPDP. Thus, the teachers believe they must have some flexibility to decide what to cut and what to keep. At the same time, the various SVPDP participants must clarify the lines of authority to which SVPDP teachers must answer. A robust sense of autonomy and a clear understanding of program authority are critical for ensuring continued teacher participation in, and enthusiasm for, the SVPDP. Thus, the issues of autonomy and authority must be addressed in future-year implementation of the SVPDP if the program is to meet its full potential.

Purpose and Content of Teacher Training Workshops

In an effort to prepare teachers for their role as SVPDP implementers, each first-year SVPDP district site organized several SVPDP teacher training workshops. The scheduling of these workshops varied from site to site; however, the CCE's goal was for each site to implement six training workshops during the first year. Some SVPDP districts provided their first session during the summer months before the 1999–2000 school year began, while others were organized early in the fall. Although the purpose of the SVPDP teacher training sessions is the same for all program sites, the site-specific differences among the districts call for adaptability in the content and delivery of the training. Essentially, each training session fulfills the CCE's vision for the SVPDP, which is to provide its teachers with the assistance they need for the most effective implementation of civic education curricular materials in the classroom, while still

meeting the individual needs of the separate districts. The SVPDP site coordinators can, and do, shape the training activities in their respective districts to reflect such characteristics as teachers' experience, available resources, and knowledge of civic history that are unique to the districts.

Most of the 1999–2000 SVPDP teacher training workshop activities fit into the following categories: CCE training and culminating activity preparation, integration of the CCE materials into regular curricula and teaching techniques, instruction on subject matter, administrative housekeeping, sharing teacher experiences, and building confidence for culminating activities. Nevertheless, while these categories represent common topics covered in the different sites' training workshops, they are illustrative, not prescriptive. Each site has its own challenges and confronts different issues that relate to district policies, teacher experience, and community factors. Hence, the SVPDP teacher training sessions reflect—and must reflect—site-specific needs. To deliver training that is useful, the workshops need to reflect each site's circumstances. There is no such thing, therefore, as "the" model training workshop.

The following sections describe common SVPDP teacher training workshop content and themes during the program's first year of implementation.

CCE Training and Culminating Activity Preparation

Most SVPDP teacher training workshops during 1999–2000 scheduled time to inform and educate the teachers about the CCE's programs, materials, and activities. Even some teachers familiar with CCE materials were not aware of the *We the People* mock congressional hearing and other culminating activities that the CCE incorporates as capstone experiences in its civic education materials. The teacher trainers used different activities in these workshops to convey information and insights about how the SVPDP teachers could lead classroom lessons to prepare students for the capstone events.

At one Philadelphia SVPDP teacher training workshop, for instance, the trainer began by presenting a lesson that he said would help prepare students for the *We the People* mock congressional hearing. The primary focus of the lesson was to assist students in becoming comfortable with speaking in front of the class and answering "cold questions." He began by handing each teacher at the training session a note card with the name of a member of the Constitutional Convention on it. He also handed out two student handbooks for the lesson. The trainer explained that he asks each student to become an "expert" on the person whose name is on the card and then to present to the class the information that he or she has discovered. The students conduct initial research by reading the descriptions of the members of the Constitutional Convention that are in an appendix of the *We the People* text. As students present their information to the class, the trainer asks them questions, and other students are held accountable because they must record certain information on a handout. The trainer shared with the teachers in the workshop some methods that they might use to help students who are particularly reluctant to give presentations, such as allowing them to stand near their own desks at first rather than forcing them to stand at the front of the classroom. He also suggested

that students may do further research for extra credit, and that this format (i.e., writing terms on note cards) also may be used with other units in *We the People.*[71]

This teacher trainer in Philadelphia stated that, to prepare for the mock congressional hearing, students should be divided into six groups, because six is the number of units in the *We the People* text, with questions for the hearing grouped into the six content areas of the six units. He and the teachers discussed how to group the students for the hearing, specifically, whether or not they should be allowed to form groups of their own choosing. He commented that the method of grouping is up to the teacher, but that he has achieved the best results at the mock congressional hearing by forming the groups himself. Teachers seemed to find this technique helpful, and at least one SVPDP teacher subsequently reported to the researchers that she now uses it regularly.[72]

Integration of CCE Materials into Regular Curricula and Teaching Techniques

The SVPDP teacher training workshops provide recommendations, and often specific suggestions, for integrating the CCE materials into regular curricula and teaching techniques. Especially for newer, less-experienced teachers, such instruction helps to alleviate some of the anxiety associated with SVPDP implementation. Training instructors make an effort to show teachers how the CCE materials can enhance their lessons, and provide concrete examples of how SVPDP lessons may be incorporated into classroom instruction on the topics of American history and government. For school districts with rigorous state or district academic standards in place, the integration component of the training delineates how the CCE materials align with existing standards, something the teachers often do not recognize on their own.

Many of the 1999–2000 SVPDP teacher training workshops began with teachers being given the opportunity to discuss their experiences with incorporating the CCE materials into their lessons. In Los Angeles, for example, during the first half of the training workshops the SVPDP site coordinator and teachers shared their SVPDP implementation problems, including their lack of time to teach the SVPDP materials. Some teachers said that they could not integrate the CCE materials into their existing curricula because they "didn't know how."[73] In a Queens teacher training workshop observed by the researchers, the SVPDP teachers spent the first part of the morning session addressing issues that they were facing in implementing the program. These issues ranged from administrative concerns to teaching styles and curriculum integration.[74]

Overall, the SVPDP teachers in several districts found the teacher training activity on curriculum integration an especially helpful part of the training sessions. One teacher in Wake County responded, "[One] way this workshop has been helpful for me so far was learning different techniques for the lessons and seeing how easy it is to [integrate them] into the curriculum."[75] The teacher training sessions increased teachers' confidence about, and comfort with, the SVPDP materials; they generally left the training sessions with a better understanding of how to use the CCE materials in their lessons and classrooms.

Instruction on Subject Matter

By including guest speakers or videos, the workshops provide the SVPDP teachers with content-specific information on topics related to civic education and American history. The teachers appreciate the opportunity to "brush up" on their Constitutional knowledge; learning about civic education with their colleagues creates a relaxed and supportive learning environment for the teachers.

Subject-matter instruction is particularly useful in Jefferson County, where some of the sixth-grade teachers lack the specific academic preparation to teach the program. These teachers typically have a generalist degree in elementary education, not one in history or social studies, so some of them are a little uncertain about their own civic knowledge. To alleviate their concern, the Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator invited an American government professor from the University of Colorado at Boulder to provide content background at one of the teacher training workshops. He said the teachers "soaked it up like sponges," and many wanted more.[76] The training sessions can thus be very helpful in refreshing teachers on the SVPDP subject matter. Increased knowledge of, and comfort with, SVPDP subject matter also can positively influence teacher confidence, which in turn may offer important benefits for the overall SVPDP implementation.

Subject matter instruction proves to be beneficial to new teachers as well. In Queens, the fifth teacher training workshop included guest speaker Stephen Schechter, from Russell Sage College. He is a professor in the area of public policy and is also the New York State *We the People* coordinator. According to the Queens site coordinator, Schechter's contribution was very helpful to the teachers' *Project Citizen* plans.[77]

Administrative Housekeeping

The SVPDP teacher training workshops provide an opportunity for the site coordinators to handle many of the program's administrative details and logistics, and to clarify its research component. In several of the pilot districts, training workshops dealt with housekeeping matters. One such matter was that of administering the student attitudinal testing, about which teachers had many questions. They appreciated the opportunity during the training sessions to express their concerns about the nature, burden, and purpose of this test; to sympathize with the students' anxiety over the test's anonymity; and to seek clarification about what constitutes experimental and control classes.

During a fall 1999 SVPDP teacher training workshop in Los Angeles, for instance, the teachers expressed their frustrations with the SVPDP's attitudinal and knowledge tests. Several teachers complained that it took them two to three days to administer the tests, because their students were confused about the wording of the questions. The teachers said that by having to take class time to explain the test questions, they wasted valuable instructional time.[78]

In Brooklyn, discussions pertaining to administering and collecting the experimental and control group attitudinal tests consumed almost two hours of one SVPDP teacher training workshop. The teachers, concerned about the stipends they had been promised for their

SVPDP participation, were informed that payment was being held up because of inconsistent and missing data, incomplete test sets, or, in some instances, no test sets. This led the SVPDP site coordinator and site evaluator to meet with each teacher attending the workshop to identify what test information was missing from that teacher's classroom. As a result, the site evaluator had no opportunity to make the SVPDP curricular presentation that he had prepared.

Administrative housekeeping issues raised at a Philadelphia SVPDP teacher training session also concerned teacher payments for program participation, as well as the problem of obtaining CCE materials and certificates for students. At this workshop, Melvin Garrison, the SVPDP district contact, was able to answer the payment issue questions. When he mentioned to teachers the certificates for participation that their students would receive after the *We the People* culminating activity, the teachers informed him that they had never received these certificates. They also had not received the questions for the upcoming mock congressional hearing that they needed to have to prepare their students. Garrison provided the teachers with copies of the certificate, and also made photocopies of the hearing questions for them.[79]

Thus, the SVPDP teacher training workshops are important, not only for instructing teachers on how to implement the SVPDP but also for addressing administrative concerns that otherwise could preclude effective implementation. In a sense, the workshops serve many of the purposes of monthly staff meetings in an organization. They also provide an important opportunity for the SVPDP site coordinators (and, thus, the CCE) to elicit feedback from teachers about the program's implementation. Though discussions of such administrative matters are, in one sense, "diversions" from the planned workshop agendas, they clearly are important to the teachers, and are a useful and beneficial part of the training sessions. Indeed, given the SVPDP teachers' continuing questions about the research component of the SVPDP, it may be appropriate to focus an early teacher training workshop each fall on this research component and its relationship to the teachers' expectations and responsibilities.

Sharing Teacher Experiences

The SVPDP teacher training workshops also provide a forum for teachers to share their SVPDP classroom successes and memorable moments with their peers. Through this sharing process, teachers in each district come to form a closer and more cohesive team of implementers. As an example of how SVPDP teachers view this aspect of the 1999–2000 teacher training workshops, a Wake County teacher stated, "I really liked the group interaction with other teachers and the materials that we received."[80] Another added, "I really liked [the] explanation of *Project Citizen* and sharing concerns and problems with each other, and I wish we had more time to share with each other and brainstorm ideas."[81] In Los Angeles, an SVPDP teacher praised a training session, saying it was valuable in providing "the chance to interact with other teachers and to share ideas."[82]

Several SVPDP teachers used the 1999–2000 teacher training workshops as an opportunity to compare ideas about teaching civics. Some reported using fiction books with civics themes, and one teacher mentioned using the newspaper as a tool to teach

civics lessons.[83] In Queens, for example, an SVPDP teacher from the Academy for New Americans commented that she is having great success using the Elian Gonzalez situation to aid her students' studies of rules and the U.S. Constitution. "In our class," she said, "we discuss this situation with the Cuban boy, Elian, and [the students] follow the Constitution to figure it all out."[84]

At times, the teacher training workshop interaction includes teachers' accounts about the influence of the SVPDP curricular materials upon student behavior. For instance, at a Brooklyn session one teacher recounted how her class had used the SVPDP concepts of power and authority to support a female student in her attempts to stop an aggressive male classmate from intimidating her. Another Brooklyn teacher, who teaches special education, related to his colleagues that almost every time he sends students home to test their parents on the civics principles they have been discussing in class, his students know more than the parents.[85]

In Queens, the site coordinator began a teacher training workshop by congratulating one teacher on an engagement and another on her promotion to assistant principal. She then turned the floor over to the teachers to share announcements with the group. One teacher said that one of her students had won a 19-inch color television from C-SPAN for her portrait essay of Zachary Taylor. Another teacher announced that he had brought a copy of the United States Constitution for everyone—in every language! This was helpful for the Queens SVPDP teachers, because their students come from diverse backgrounds.[86]

By sharing experiences, the participants make the training workshops into an informal group gathering rather than a didactic program requirement. Such a supportive environment, shared with peers who care about their personal as well as professional accomplishments, makes all the teachers feel more comfortable.

Building Confidence for Culminating Activities

In most SVPDP district sites, the teachers are anxious about conducting the culminating activities. At the SVPDP teacher training workshops, therefore, trainers and site coordinators tried to alleviate the teachers' anxiety and excite them about these activities.

At a Los Angeles SVPDP teacher training session, for instance, the teachers expressed particular concern when they discovered the CCE's expectations with respect to time and scope for a culminating activity. However, once the site coordinator informed them that each teacher could work with another teacher and tailor the culminating activity to suit their classes' specific needs and experience, the teachers felt less overwhelmed. They became even more at ease after viewing a videotaped *We the People* mock congressional hearing. The teachers agreed that preparing for and conducting the congressional hearing was a manageable task, both for them and for their students. During the second half of the training session, the teachers broke into groups and began the actual planning of the congressional hearing. Collaborating with other teachers in planning the culminating activities was extremely helpful. Many teachers wrote on the day's evaluation forms that this was a highlight of the training session.[87]

A similar situation occurred at an SVPDP teacher training workshop in Queens. As in some other districts, the Queens teachers were not aware of the second culminating activity prior to the training session. The site coordinator adeptly downplayed the time required to do the project. Although there seemed to be a little uneasiness when the activity was first brought up, the teachers quickly settled down and became engaged in the training session.[88]

Thus, another important accomplishment of the SVPDP teacher training workshops is an improvement in teacher confidence about and attitudes toward the culminating activities. Instead of viewing these activities as an unnecessary burden, the teachers come to see them as an opportunity. By aggressively highlighting the benefits of the culminating activities, while at the same time demystifying the activities' perceived downsides, the teacher training workshops significantly improve the teachers' enthusiasm about and engagement in the culminating activities.

Best Practices in SVPDP Teacher Training Workshops

To convey the content described above effectively to SVPDP teachers, the site coordinators take a number of approaches to organizing and conducting the SVPDP teacher training workshops. Despite differences in the structure and delivery of these sessions across districts, the pilot sites use some common techniques that deserve special mention as best practices that can and should be considered for use in future workshops. They include inviting guest speakers, teachers role-playing as students, increasing exposure to CCE programs, making criticism constructive, using workshop time to meet teacher needs, and providing resources. Each of the SVPDP pilot sites implemented at least some of these best practices.

Inviting Guest Speakers

Many first-year teacher training workshops included guest speakers. Often these visitors were experts in civics-related topics or had a history of involvement with the CCE. The SVPDP teachers' response to these speakers was overwhelmingly positive. The following examples highlight the information provided by guest speakers at selected SVPDP teacher training workshops.

1. *In Jefferson County, the SVPDP site coordinator invited Laurie McNown, an American government professor from the University of Colorado at Boulder, to provide the SVPDP teachers with content background on civic education and American History at a teacher training workshop.* Because the Jefferson County elementary school teachers usually have generalist backgrounds in elementary education, many of them feel uncertain about their own civic knowledge. Accordingly, in order to help prepare the teachers to complete the *Project Citizen* materials the Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator invited McNown to make a presentation on how public policy is formulated. McNown talked about setting policy agendas using the influence of interest groups and public institutions, and she discussed how and why some issues make it onto the agenda while others do not. She also walked the teachers through a simple cost-benefit analysis and encouraged them

to talk to their students about policy decisions in this way. In addition, she discussed how policy decisions actually are made, implemented, evaluated, and terminated.[89]

2. *In Los Angeles, the SVPDP site coordinator invited Ken Rodriguez, CCE's director of curriculum development, to talk with the teachers at a training workshop about his own experience working with limited English proficient students on the* We the People *mock congressional hearing.* Rodriguez has worked with fifth graders at Bell Gardens Middle School in the Montebello school district in Los Angeles. He acknowledged that language issues posed some challenges for the limited English proficient students, but stressed that using the SVPDP would help the students develop language skills.[90]

3. *In Brooklyn, the SVPDP site coordinator invited Walter Fisher, SVPDP site evaluator for Community School District 23 (Brooklyn) and a frequent trainer for the CCE, to speak with the teachers at a teacher training workshop on the SVPDP's justice curricular materials.* Fisher outlined for the teachers three forms of justice: distributive justice, corrective justice, and procedural justice. Before discussing the curricular aspects of justice relating to the CCE materials, he opened the floor for general discussion about the teachers' own attitudes about justice.[91]

4. *In Wake County, the SVPDP site coordinator invited speakers for the teacher training workshops who are familiar with the CCE materials, including Susan Roe from the CCE.* Roe actually facilitated Wake County's entire third teacher training workshop. Her prior teaching experience in North Carolina enabled her to understand teachers' concerns about the SVPDP fit with North Carolina's required curriculum. The Wake County site coordinator also invited one of the district's SVPDP teachers, who had attended the CCE's *Project Citizen Academy* during the summer of 1999, to lead the *Project Citizen* training for the other Wake County SVPDP teachers.[92]

Role-Playing as Students

A common training technique used at several SVPDP teacher training workshops was to have teachers role-play as students. At these workshops, trainers often asked teachers to assume the role of students so that they could experience firsthand the use of the CCE materials. In addition, role-playing enabled the SVPDP teachers to encounter the challenges and benefits of collaborative learning. The teachers found the role-playing activity useful. The CCE materials are user-friendly, and the SVPDP lessons engaged the teachers in the type of active participation and group learning integral to the SVPDP. Moreover, the use of role-plays shaped the training workshop environment by fostering collaboration and communication among teacher colleagues who previously had not worked together. Finally, role-play exercises made the sessions more fun for teachers: instead of listening to lectures on how to teach and conduct an activity, the teachers could jump in and explore for themselves. The following examples illustrate ways in which role-plays were used in the SVPDP teacher training workshops.

1. *In Queens, the teacher trainer Maria Gallo helped the SVPDP teachers learn how to implement an effective technique for group work.* For many of the activities she

introduced in the SVPDP teacher training workshop she directed, Gallo had the teachers go through the exercises as if they were students. She taught teachers how to use the jigsaw technique, in which students break into groups and then break into smaller groups that have at least one member from the original group. In the smaller groups, the students are asked to study a concept that they would then teach to their original group upon return. The lesson emphasized time management, leadership, and critical thinking. It is a difficult lesson that is demanding for both teachers and students. Gallo also gave an exhaustive presentation of the major steps in completing a portfolio project for *Project Citizen*. For many of these steps, especially the initial brainstorming for project ideas and the initial evaluation of policy problems, Gallo had the teachers act as students and go through the exercises. She also brought to the workshop rough samples of her students' *Project Citizen* portfolios and reports to demonstrate the final product.[93]

2. *At a Los Angeles SVPDP teacher training workshop, the teachers participated in a mock congressional hearing after working in groups to research their topic.* Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator Elaine Craig Segal and SVPDP teacher training facilitator Jackie Johnson wanted the teachers to experience the mock congressional hearing for themselves, so they had them act as students and participate in a mock hearing. The teachers broke up into four groups, and each group was assigned a question for research and discussion. The questions came from the CCE's culminating activity guidelines, and the teachers used the *We the People* text as a resource (as the students would). The four groups took turns presenting their materials, while the other teachers acted as judges.[94]

3. *In Philadelphia, the teacher trainer at one SVPDP workshop divided the teachers into groups to work on* We the People *lessons.* After completing a demonstration of a *We the People* lesson, the trainer asked the teachers to break into pairs, and assigned each pair another lesson in *We the People*. Each pair of teachers was asked to brainstorm ideas for teaching the assigned lesson, and then to lead a discussion of those ideas with the other teachers at the training workshop. After each pair made its presentation, the trainer suggested additional methods for teaching that pair's lesson.[95]

Increasing Exposure to the CCE Programs

The SVPDP teacher training sessions provide an opportunity to enhance teachers' knowledge about CCE programs and activities. While many teachers had heard of the CCE congressional hearings and competitions, often they were unfamiliar with how the capstone CCE event—the culminating activity—was structured and prepared for. Watching CCE videotapes of the *We the People* and *Project Citizen* activities, including the national competitions, was one particularly helpful way to help teachers learn about CCE programs and increase their enthusiasm for these programs and the SVPDP. Such an increased exposure to the CCE provides the SVPDP teachers with important background information and insights that place it within the context of the CCE's mission and goals. The following are two examples of this practice at SVPDP pilot sites.

1. *At a Los Angeles SVPDP teacher training workshop, the SVPDP teachers viewed videos from the CCE that discussed and provided examples of the* We the People *mock congressional hearing.* After viewing the video on the hearing, teachers agreed that creating such a congressional hearing was manageable, both for them and for their students. The CCE's director of curriculum development, Ken Rodriguez, showed the teachers a video of a fifth-graders' congressional hearing. In it, the students performed wonderfully and demonstrated a thorough understanding of questions and concepts. Rodriguez's point was that all students could excel in developing a congressional hearing, regardless of age, language skills, or abilities. He emphasized that every student should have a voice in the process. After they viewed his video, the teachers felt much more comfortable with the idea of planning their own culminating activity. They even requested copies of the video to show their own students what the congressional hearing would be like.[96]

2. *In Brooklyn, SVPDP teachers attending a teacher training workshop viewed the CCE's* We the People *video after it was introduced by an experienced CCE teacher, Linda Steinmann.* After viewing the CCE video, the teachers were interested in learning more about how they could get their students involved in (or at least initially exposed to) the *We the People* competition. Overall, viewing the video not only increased the teachers' enthusiasm for the SVPDP and CCE materials, but also alleviated some of their anxiety about conducting the culminating activity in their own classrooms.[97]

Making Criticism Constructive

SVPDP teacher training workshop participants often wanted to vent their frustrations in these sessions, to take advantage of a time when they had the attention of the SVPDP site coordinator. Their frustrations commonly centered on the CCE's expectations about their implementing the SVPDP, district policies and mandates that created difficulties in doing this, and general challenges associated with teaching in large and diverse school systems. The SVPDP site coordinators and workshop trainers often transformed the teachers' frustrations into positive opportunities for them to work and learn together in a constructive manner. Training sessions with constructive activities enabled the teachers to focus on the SVPDP components that were readily attainable. These teacher training workshop activities did not trivialize the teachers' concerns and difficulties. Rather, teachers' time and energy were channeled into constructive solutions, enabling them to experience a sense of empowerment and accomplishment by the end of the session. Two examples of this approach follow.

1. *In Brooklyn, the November 1999 SVPDP teacher training workshop proved to be engaging and full of positive energy for the SVPDP teachers, who were able to use problems as jumping-off points for creating solutions.* This SVPDP workshop was not a complaining session; rather, the teachers discussed program strengths and weaknesses and brainstormed with one another. The session began with a reflection and discussion exercise, which used "check-in" questions. The following questions were asked in this activity: How is the SVPDP program working thus far? What

lessons have been implemented? What are the challenges to successful implementation in my classroom? What are the strengths? What works? What are the weaknesses? What does not work? What are some suggestions to improve implementation? This technique was helpful in delineating the program's progress and the improvements made since the last workshop, without ignoring the concerns of the teachers.[98]

2. *In Los Angeles, the SVPDP teacher training workshop facilitator for the November 1999 session devised concrete examples to help teachers incorporate the CCE materials into their lessons.* The second component of this workshop included teacher participation in various lessons prepared by the workshop facilitator, Jackie Johnson. The purpose of this exercise was to share effective lessons and strategies to help teachers more easily integrate the CCE materials with their regular curriculum. These lessons included *Locke Rocks*, a letter to a sixth grader about the benefits of student government; writing letters to the editor of a school newspaper; and creating political cartoons.[99]

Using Workshop Time to Meet Teacher Needs

Finding sufficient time is a problem for teachers both in the classroom and in training sessions. There never seems to be enough time to cover all the necessary materials. Allowing the SVPDP teachers to use some time at the teacher training workshops to address their individual SVPDP implementation needs not only respects their perspectives and participation, but also enables them to make connections and share their experiences with their colleagues. This opportunity is critical, since the teacher training workshops may be the only times when participating teachers can meet to learn from each other. The SVPDP teachers often know their own needs best, and how to make the most effective use of their time during workshop discussions. In providing opportunities for teachers to meet together at training workshops, SVPDP site coordinators not only demonstrate that they value the teachers' contributions and time but they also create an opportunity for themselves to learn from teachers by observing what they focus on in their groups. The following are some examples of this technique.

1. *In Los Angeles, during the second half of an SVPDP teacher training workshop, the teachers broke into groups and began the actual planning of the mock congressional hearings to be conducted in their classes.* This opportunity for teachers to collaborate with each other in planning the *We the People* culminating activity was extremely helpful and an excellent use of the teachers' time. Many teachers wrote on the workshop evaluation forms that such work on a topic of immediate interest to them was a highlight of the training session. All of the teachers left the session saying they would conduct some form of the mock congressional hearing and include all of their students in the process.[100]

2. *In Jefferson County, for the sixth and final SVPDP teacher training workshop, the site coordinator decided to allow teachers either to work on individual SVPDP issues at their schools or to work in small groups on common problems.* This approach to scheduling the workshops allows teachers to work on SVPDP matters of primary

concern to them. For example, a few of the teachers who have combined fifth- and sixth-grade classes may meet to work on the unique problems associated with teaching the SVPDP to combined classes.[101]

Providing Resources

Finally, in all the pilot districts the SVPDP teacher training workshops provide an ideal opportunity for the SVPDP site coordinators to provide teachers with resources on civic education, school violence, and teaching techniques. The following are a few examples of the success with which this approach has been used to enhance SVPDP implementation.

1. *In Philadelphia, the SVPDP district contact and social studies coordinator, Melvin Garrison, used a teacher training workshop to distribute CCE certificates to teachers for them to give their students following the completion of the* We the People *culminating activity.* When Garrison informed the SVPDP teachers at a workshop about the certificates their students would receive for their *We the People* participation, the teachers informed him that they had never received these certificates. Because all the SVPDP teachers were gathered at the workshop, it was convenient for Garrison to duplicate the certificates and provide them to the teachers that same day.[102]

2. *In Brooklyn, SVPDP site coordinator Nicole Williams and site evaluator Walter Fisher used a teacher training workshop to distribute supplemental materials and resources to teachers.* At one training workshop, one teacher mentioned that teachers did not have CCE teacher's guides for the SVPDP materials. Less than an hour later, Williams disseminated copies of the guide to those who needed it. Thus, the training sessions can serve as an opportunity for site coordinators to supply resources that may otherwise require postal delivery or involve lengthy delivery delays. Meanwhile, Fisher was able to provide to all SVPDP teachers a training packet of materials that he compiled that would be an excellent resource for them.[103]

Conclusions

The SVPDP teachers are the frontline troops in the implementation of the SVPDP's curriculum of civic education and violence prevention, and they make any success the program enjoys possible. It is clear that teachers who participate in the SVPDP relish their important role. Even though they have faced some challenges in implementing the program, nearly all of the first-year SVPDP teachers remain enthusiastic about both the goals of the program and their personal involvement in it. The vast majority of teachers in the program reported that the troubles they faced in the first year of implementation were not enough to deter them from participating in the program again. Indeed, far from being overly dismayed and discouraged, these teachers ultimately displayed a surprising exuberance. In a March 2000 survey, approximately one-half of the 55 responding SVPDP teachers expressed the highest degree of willingness possible for continuing to participate in the SVPDP (7, on a scale of 1 to 7), and approximately 75 percent of the

respondents expressed a high degree of willingness to further participate (5, 6, or 7, on a scale of 1 to 7).[104]

Many variables have shaped both the SVPDP teachers' implementation of the program during its first year and their willingness to participate in the program again. Though there are important exceptions, in general the SVPDP teachers have more education, have more years of teaching experience, and are more familiar with civics and the CCE materials than their non-SVPDP peers. Although the SVPDP teacher selection process was not random, which limits the research inferences that can be drawn, there is little doubt that the teachers who ultimately were selected have been instrumental in the success the first year of SVPDP implementation has enjoyed in all the SVPDP pilot sites.

There are, nonetheless, obstacles that have prevented even more effective program implementation by the teachers. The SVPDP's first-year plan was very ambitious, requiring that its teachers (as well as the SVPDP site coordinators and other participants) demonstrate a great deal of ingenuity and patience in coping with the time, curriculum, and evaluation challenges associated with its implementation. Some teachers were overwhelmed by the added challenges and demands; others responded creatively, enthusiastically, and effectively. In many instances, communication among the teachers, site coordinators, and the CCE eased rising teacher tensions; other aspects, including the CCE's distribution of its SVPDP lesson checklist and time line in October 1999, were hampered by miscommunication. In general, the more complete, flexible, and timely the implementation guidance that came to the SVPDP teachers, the more useful they found the advice and the more willingly they embraced it.

The SVPDP teachers were expected to participate in several SVPDP teacher training workshops during the 1999–2000 school year; these workshops were intended to assist them with the SVPDP implementation and improve their knowledge about, and their confidence in, their ability to use the SVPDP curricular materials successfully. Although each site organized and conducted its own workshops, within general CCE guidelines, most districts covered similar SVPDP-related topics in a comparable manner. These workshops proved invaluable in helping the SVPDP teachers implement the program. Teachers made a point of praising the teacher training workshops that incorporated such components as invited guest speakers, role-play as students, increased exposure to CCE programs, constructive criticism, use of workshop time to address teacher needs, and distribution of resources. The workshops have, therefore, played an important, positive role in the successful first-year implementation of the SVPDP.

Successful implementation and assessment of the SVPDP hinges on teachers' willingness and ability to carry out the program. This requires, in turn, finding ways to communicate the goals of the program effectively to the SVPDP teachers, as well as the means by which those goals can be met. By addressing teacher concerns and clearing away obstacles to better teaching, the CCE will enable the SVPDP to achieve the objectives that teachers and other program participants agree are important and worthwhile.

Recommendations

The following recommendations propose actions that could enhance both the teachers' roles and the teacher training workshops in implementing the SVPDP.

1. *Prior to the beginning of each school year, the CCE and its SVPDP districts, schools, and teachers must have a clear understanding of the program's goals and expectations and of each SVPDP participant's responsibilities.* The SVPDP program goals and expectations, and participant responsibilities, should be reviewed and updated annually to ensure that each year's SVPDP participants understand them. Several teachers in the first year of the SVPDP expressed concern that SVPDP requirements were added to the program throughout the year. In future years, the CCE should work closely with the SVPDP teachers and other district-level participants to ensure that the program requirements are clearly articulated to teachers, and that teachers understood them. Developing participation and program agreements to be agreed upon by the CCE and SVPDP districts at the beginning of each school year would encourage district personnel and teachers to develop internal policies for integrating and using the SVPDP materials in the classroom. This also would give program participants an opportunity to raise and resolve in a timely manner any concerns about classroom or conflicting curricular demands. Perhaps a simple and explicit one-page memorandum of understanding listing all SVPDP teacher responsibilities could be developed and used in most, if not all, of the SVPDP districts. Another approach to ensure teacher understanding might be to pair experienced and knowledgeable SVPDP teachers who have participated in the program with those participating for the first time.

2. *Prior to the second-year implementation of the SVPDP, the CCE, SVPDP site coordinators, and SVPDP teachers should collaborate to find ways of alleviating teacher concerns about the time constraints that affect the implementation of the SVPDP.* SVPDP teachers communicated to the researchers that their greatest source of anxiety is the lack of sufficient time to meet their SVPDP obligations and still carry out their regular curricular and instructional responsibilities. Although the majority of teachers expressed very high levels of willingness to participate in the program again, the CCE should aggressively solicit the advice of site coordinators and teachers about how best to address the time issue, bearing in mind two characteristics of the SVPDP. First, the SVPDP teachers are volunteers. They are the most willing—and often the most able—to teach the subject matter, so there is no reason to alienate them by overburdening them with lessons or expectations. Second, the SVPDP, as currently designed, has a research component designed to assess the effects on student knowledge and attitudes of a program on school violence prevention based on civics curricula. The CCE therefore must balance the need for program implementation uniformity to ensure valid research outcomes with that of allowing teachers flexibility and autonomy in implementing the SVPDP. If the CCE requires teachers to follow a curricular intervention that does not take their concerns about time constraints into account, it will encourage the kinds of *ad hoc* variations in program implementation that it wishes to avoid. In order to enhance both program

effectiveness and research validity, it is necessary to ensure that all elements included in the second year of the SVPDP implementation are absolutely essential for the program's success and are appropriate for participating schools, teachers, and students.

3. *The CCE, working with its SVPDP districts, should make every effort to have each district schedule its initial and primary teacher training workshop during early or mid-summer each year to train the SVPDP teachers on the goals and components of the SVPDP, the use of the CCE curricular materials and culminating activities, and the research component of the SVPDP and its relationship to SVPDP teacher responsibilities.* Providing the SVPDP teachers with introductory training before the school year begins improves the likelihood that they will start the school year well prepared. Access to the SVPDP materials during the summer will allow teachers sufficient time to read the materials and create lesson plans for the upcoming year, lessening the need for planning time during the busy school year. Scheduling a teacher training workshop during the summer also will help the SVPDP teachers understand the significance and administration of SVPDP pretests. Early training will enhance teacher understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the program, provide teachers with time to process information and learn more about the program, and possibly increase the retention rate of participating teachers. An early training session would also serve as an excellent opportunity for the teachers to provide timely feedback on the program and the training sessions to the SVPDP districts and site coordinators, enabling later workshops to focus on the specific needs of teachers and their districts. Finally, school and district officials may be more willing to allow teachers to participate in the SVPDP if the teachers have fewer SVPDP workshop commitments during the school year.

4. *The CCE and its SVPDP districts should ensure that the SVPDP teacher training workshops include training activities that are appropriate for the teachers and their districts.* First, the SVPDP teacher training workshops should use trainers who are familiar with the CCE materials and able to advise school officials and teachers about what has worked and not worked in the past. Next, workshop activities need to be suitable to the experience levels of the participating teachers. Inexperienced teachers may require additional training sessions on specific teaching strategies and techniques appropriate to the SVPDP. For teachers who might have difficulty in effectively using cooperative learning strategies, training sessions should focus on the development of collaborative learning styles and techniques. A critical element in organizing and conducting training workshops is understanding the teachers' comfort level with and knowledge about civic education. For instance, upper elementary teachers may have little academic background in history, civics, and government, and even teachers certified to teach in middle schools may lack the civics depth useful for effective SVPDP implementation. Thus, teacher training workshops may be needed to address content as well as instructional strategies relating to CCE materials. Finally, all SVPDP teacher training workshops should be immediately evaluated by the SVPDP teachers; this evaluation should include opportunities for the teachers to recommend topics for future workshops.

5. *The CCE should encourage the SVPDP teachers from the first year (1999–2000) to participate in SVPDP teacher training workshops in future years.* With the completion of the first year of the SVPDP, site coordinators have access to an important new resource in planning and conducting the SVPDP teacher training workshops in the second and future years—experienced SVPDP teachers. These teachers generally know the program and can give new SVPDP teachers guidance about what works and what does not. In some districts, this kind of peer training has already been done successfully. For example, one Wake County first-year SVPDP teacher attended the CCE's *Project Citizen Academy* during the summer of 1999 and thus was able to direct the *Project Citizen* training for the other first-year SVPDP teachers in Wake County this past year.[105] Having peers participate in the SVPDP teacher training sessions should increase participants' receptiveness to the program and its implementation. It should also help to lessen the SVPDP teachers' criticisms and concerns, since the experienced teachers will have encountered and overcome many of the same challenges and, thus, will be able to suggest concrete solutions to the problems the new SVPDP teachers are facing.

6. *The CCE should work with experienced teacher trainers to develop manuals and training packets of "best practices" for all SVPDP teacher trainers to use as a guide.* It is critical that the lessons of the first year of the SVPDP implementation not be forgotten. This is especially true with respect to the SVPDP teacher training workshops. This chapter has described a few successful and effective instructional practices; additional strategies no doubt could be identified by the SVPDP site coordinators and others. The CCE should take the lead in identifying individuals to develop appropriate manuals and training packets of "best practices" that could be disseminated to all SVPDP site coordinators and teacher trainers. As appropriate, these manuals and packets should be available electronically as well as in printed form. The CCE should work with its SVPDP site coordinators to identify materials to include in these manuals and packets. For example, the Brooklyn site coordinator, an experienced teacher trainer, has created a teacher training packet for her site that contains a professional development reflection sheet. This sheet has sections for teachers to complete after each teacher training workshop, including "New Ideas I've Gotten," "Actions I'm Going To Take," "Questions That Have Been Raised In My Mind," and "Feelings That I've Experienced." This sheet is an example of existing materials that have been successfully used in SVPDP and other CCE teacher training workshops and that could be incorporated into a "best practices" teacher training manual.[106]

Notes

[1] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[2] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Brian Loney, Project Coordinator for the Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff and SVPDP Site Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Arna Caplan, Elementary School Curriculum Writer—Intermediate, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Cindy Stout, Middle School Curriculum Writer, Jefferson County Public Schools; at Jefferson County Public Schools District Office, Golden, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[3] Ibid.

[4] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[5] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999.

[6] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[7] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 20, 1999; and statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, December 18, 1999.

[8] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999; and statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 19, 2000.

[9] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[10] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, February 29, 2000.

[11] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[12] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[13] Lesser interview.

[14] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[15] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 13, 1999.

[16] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[17] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 13, 1999.

[18] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Westminster, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[22] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[23] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Carleen Wray, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999.

[24] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[25] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[26] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[27] Interview by Emily Roth and Kris Mack with Carleen Wray, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 22, 2000.

[28] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[29] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[30] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Calabasas, California, February 22, 2000.

[31] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[32] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[33] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[34] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[35] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid. Also, statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 29, 2000.

[38] Telephone interview by Susan Vermeer with Dale Greenawald, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, March 20, 2000.

[39] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[40] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, February 22, 2000.

[41] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with an SVPDP Teacher, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[42] Greenawald telephone interview.

[43] SVPDP Teacher interview, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, February 16, 2000.

[44] LBJ School SVPDP Follow-Up Questionnaire for Site Coordinators, April 2000.

[45] Telephone interview by Tinh Nguyen with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, May 12, 2000

[46] Greenawald telephone interview.

[47] SVPDP Teacher interview, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 7, 1999.

[48] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[49] Ibid.

[50] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[51] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Melvin Garrison, District Social Studies Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[52] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Nancy Cope, District Social Studies Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999; and interview by Kris Mack and Emily Roth with Nancy Cope, District Social Studies Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 23, 2000.

[53] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Lou Rosen, SVPDP Director and Director of Publication Services, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, California, February 22, 2000.

[54] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[55] James Sterngold, "Los Angeles May Ease Up On School Promotion Policy," *The New York Times*, December 2, 1999, p. 20A.

[56] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[57] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Eiber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Lakewood, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[58] Cope interview, November 11, 1999.

[59] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Melvin Garrison, District Social Studies Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 12, 1999.

[62] Lesser interview.

[63] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[64] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[65] Sterngold, "Los Angeles May Ease Up on School Promotion Policy."

[66] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[67] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[68] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[69] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999; and SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[70] Statements by Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[71] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Craig Segal interview, February 22, 2000.

[74] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[75] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[76] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[77] Email correspondence to Eva Stahl from Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, April 24, 2000.

[78] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[79] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[80] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[81] Ibid.

[82] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[83] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[84] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 29, 2000.

[85] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), December 18, 1999.

[86] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 29, 2000.

[87] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[88] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[89] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[90] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[91] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), December 18, 1999.

[92] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[93] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[94] Craig Segal interview, February 22, 2000.

[95] Notes from SVPDP Presentation by Myron Yoder, District Social Studies Coordinator, Allentown School District, Allentown, Pennsylvania, at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[96] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[97] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), November 20, 1999.

[98] Notes from SVPDP Presentation by Nicole Williams, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 20, 1999.

[99] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[100] Craig Segal interview, February 22, 2000.

[101] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[102] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[103] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), December 18, 1999.

[104] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

[105] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[106] Handout in SVPDP Teacher Training Packet prepared and distributed by Nicole Williams, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 20, 1999.

The SVPDP in Action: Los Angeles Unified School District

SVPDP Students Use Problem Solving Skills to Help Their School

In the Los Angeles Unified School District, two middle school students—one girl and one boy—shared with the researchers their insights into the SVPDP curricular materials, their school, and their community. The girl said, "I like this [SVPDP] class because I enjoy learning about history and the past. I enjoy working in groups, and I find that *We the People* is an easy book to read." Commenting on the gangs in the community, she said, "Violence and gangs are bad for kids. We need to be protected. After all, we are the future. The gangs that hang out on 18th street come to the school to make graffiti. I feel bad when I see it, because it is really ugly and expensive for the school to take off the walls." The boy agreed and said that the school cannot afford to be spending its money cleaning up graffiti. "Instead," he said, "the school should invest money in computers, new desks and tables, and especially classrooms!"

The girl mentioned a promotion in which students mail cereal box tops along with the name of their school to a cereal company, which then makes contributions to the school. She told researchers that she was collecting box tops, because she wants to help her school. "Maybe they can use this money to clean up graffiti." During the conversation, the two students brainstormed and talked about how the whole class should do a "box top project," or even organize it campuswide. The boy suggested, "If students can't afford to pay for the stamp, maybe we can just collect [the box tops] from students, give them to the principal, and have him pay for the stamps." The two students were very satisfied with their idea.

Chapter 6. SVPDP Curricular Materials and Culminating Activities

The School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) is based on the principle that providing students with in-class opportunities to develop cognitive and social skills, engage in quality civic education, and participate in cooperative learning will help them refrain from violence. To accomplish this, the program encourages SVPDP teachers to use instructional methodologies and strategies that emphasize critical thinking, cooperative learning, group problem solving, and performance-based assessment. Civic knowledge and civic dispositions are integral parts of the SVPDP, as are the students' learning processes and their participation in the culminating activities.

This chapter begins by describing the first-year implementation and integration of the SVPDP curricular materials, including details on the participating grades, subject matter, and academic ability levels of students, as well as an examination of the teaching methodologies used by the SVPDP teachers and the extent to which they use the CCE materials. It also analyzes the alignment of the SVPDP materials to district and state curricular requirements, teacher attitudes toward integration, and the factors that influence those attitudes. The discussion then turns to an examination of the SVPDP curricular materials. Finally, because the CCE regards class participation in the culminating activities as an important element of the SVPDP, the chapter looks at the first-year SVPDP's culminating activities. In conclusion, recommendations are presented to strengthen the implementation of the SVPDP in future years.

SVPDP Curricular Materials

The SVPDP is intended to be a supplement to regular middle school course content and curricular requirements; it most naturally complements social studies courses. The program is comprised of approximately 60 lessons from the following Center for Civic Education (CCE) publications: *We the People... The Citizen and the Constitution (We the People)*; *We the People... Project Citizen (Project Citizen)*; *Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice (Foundations of Democracy)*; and *Violence in Schools: Developing Prevention Plans*. Chapters 1 and 2 provide brief descriptions of these CCE programs and the initial SVPDP implementation plan, including the use of the SVPDP materials and lessons.

While the CCE has recommended that SVPDP teachers use its October 1999 curriculum outline checklist, curriculum integration outline, and related timeline (see chapter 5 and appendices D and E), the CCE also has urged site coordinators and teachers in the seven district sites to use their professional judgment in deciding how and when to integrate the SVPDP lessons in their regular course frameworks. This section describes the types of classes participating in the first year of the SVPDP and the teachers' use of the SVPDP lessons.

Classes in Which the SVPDP Is Used

In each of the seven SVPDP pilot district sites in 1999–2000, between 10 and 30 classes have used the SVPDP. These classes varied by grade levels, subject matter, and student academic ability levels.[1]

Grade Levels

The SVPDP is designed to be used in upper elementary and middle school grades. Table 6.1 summarizes the distribution of grade levels of the SVPDP classes across all seven pilot district sites taught by the teachers responding to the November 1999 questionnaire.

Table 6.1
Reported Grade Levels of SVPDP Classes: 1999–2000

	Number of Teacher Responses			
District	**Fifth Grade**	**Sixth Grade**	**Seventh Grade**	**Eighth Grade**
Brooklyn	0	1	6	3
Denver	0	1	1	7
Jefferson County	6	15	0	0
Los Angeles	0	1	1	14
Philadelphia	0	0	1	10
Queens	0	1	10	9
Wake County	0	0	0	2
All Districts	6	19	19	45

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.
Note: Five Jefferson County teachers teach classes composed of both fifth and sixth graders.

During 1999–2000, the largest number of students participating in the SVPDP has been in the eighth grade. However, some teachers from Community School District 23 (Brooklyn) and Community School District 30 (Queens) reported teaching the SVPDP curricular materials primarily to seventh graders.

Jefferson County Public Schools is unique among the seven districts, because it is the only first-year site in which elementary schools use the SVPDP (in this district, elementary schools include the sixth grade). The majority of Jefferson County SVPDP students are in the sixth grade; some are in the fifth grade. Some SVPDP teachers work in schools that use the "looping" concept, in which the teachers work with the same students for two years, namely, fifth and sixth grades. Thus, these SVPDP classrooms combine fifth- and sixth-grade classes. However, some of the Jefferson County teachers who use the SVPDP teach a single sixth-grade class. Another SVPDP teacher has a class of fifth graders, which she will teach again next year when the students are sixth graders.[2]

Subject Matter of Courses

During 1999–2000, most of the SVPDP teachers have implemented the program in American history classes. The SVPDP is also taught in at least three language arts classes, one science class, one health class, and one bilingual Spanish class. In Jefferson

County's elementary classrooms, the SVPDP is used during the periods allotted for social studies and reading instruction.

Table 6.2 summarizes the subject matter of courses in each of the seven district sites in which the SVPDP has been implemented in 1999–2000.

Table 6.2
Subject Matter of Courses in Which SVPDP Is Integrated: 1999–2000

District	Subject Matter
Brooklyn	Social Studies (7), History (2), Math (2), Reading (2), Language Arts (2), Global Studies, Science
Denver	American History (5), Social Studies (3), Gifted and Talented, Language Arts, Gifted Reading, Leadership, Reading Enrichment
Jefferson County	Elementary Education (9), Social Studies (7), Reading (6), Writing (5), Math (5), Science (3), Language Arts (2), Spelling (2), Listening
Los Angeles	American History (10), Social Studies (5), English (3), Language Arts (2), Reading, English as a Second Language, Ancient History
Philadelphia	Social Studies (7), Reading (3), American History (2), Math (2), Science (2), English (2), World Geography (2), American Government
Queens	Social Studies (11), Math (2), Science (2), English as a Second Language, English, Spanish, Arts, Spanish Literature
Wake County	U.S. and North Carolina History (2)

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.
Note: For each district, the numbers in parentheses indicate the numbers of responses for those subjects. The number of subjects taught at each SVPDP site does not necessarily equal the number of SVPDP teachers, because some teachers teach in more than one subject area.

Generally, teachers integrate the SVPDP curricular materials into the regular subject matter lessons of their classes. In a few instances, when they teach an elective course, teachers implement the SVPDP as a stand-alone curriculum. The situation is slightly different in Jefferson County, however, because elementary school teachers typically do not teach subject matter courses in isolation. In some SVPDP classrooms, the participating teachers have students for only one or two class periods; in other SVPDP classrooms, the teachers may have the same students all day. Therefore, some SVPDP teachers have more instructional flexibility and are able to set aside a regular time each day to teach social studies and the SVPDP. Other teachers use their reading and social studies time for students to work on the SVPDP.[3] In Brooklyn, for example, SVPDP teachers have found creative ways to use the CCE materials in the classroom during times other than those set aside for social studies lessons. One teacher uses the CCE materials as a reader during designated reading times, because her students prefer the SVPDP *Foundations of Democracy* materials to the Basal reader.[4]

Student Academic Ability Levels

The students participating in the 1999–2000 SVPDP represent a range of academic ability levels: at-risk students, special education students, limited English proficiency (LEP) students, remedial students, regular students, honors students, and gifted and talented students. Some SVPDP teachers believe that the program is appropriate for students at all academic ability levels. One teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) stressed to the researchers its effectiveness with at-risk students. She teaches youth whom the district has identified as "opportunity kids"—students previously enrolled in alternative schools who recently have been given the opportunity to join a traditional school setting. Based on her students' experiences with the SVPDP curricular materials, she believes that at-risk students stand to benefit tremendously from the opportunity to use and learn from the CCE materials used in the program. Commenting on how the SVPDP could help these students grow as individuals and as learners, she said, "These students want power, but they do not like authority."[5]

Another teacher in Los Angeles has had a more mixed reaction. He recognizes the benefits that the SVPDP content specifically provides to LEP students. However, he also reported that using collaborative learning methods in classes of LEP students has been difficult. In order to keep the students' attention and focus in these classes, he has had to use a more traditional teacher-centered, lecture approach for his lessons.[6]

Teaching the SVPDP Curricular Materials

The SVPDP teachers vary in the manner and extent to which they use the program materials. Researchers observed that most SVPDP implementation differences in the seven sites involve the use of teaching methodologies and the amount of instructional time allocated to the CCE materials. As necessary, teachers have adjusted the time spent on the SVPDP to accommodate circumstances specific to their schools or districts. Often, these instructional time limitations have made it difficult to complete the SVPDP.

Methodologies Used by Teachers

The SVPDP emphasizes the use of instructional methodologies that foster critical thinking, cooperation, and group problem solving. The program also promotes the use of performance-based assessments. Cooperative learning, class discussion, and student presentation are fundamental teaching strategies endorsed by the CCE. Moreover, student presentations, such as the *We the People* mock congressional hearing and the *Project Citizen* portfolio presentation, provide opportunities for performance-based assessment.

Classroom observations by the researchers confirmed that most SVPDP teachers are using the methodologies recommended in the SVPDP, relying largely on cooperative learning, class discussion, the Socratic method, and student presentations. Some of the teachers reported that the best aspect of the program is its focus on cooperative learning, discussion, problem solving, reading, writing, and awareness about current events.[7] At the same time, other teachers were critical of the program's strong emphasis on

cooperative learning and discussion, arguing that these methodologies are too time-consuming.

Cooperative learning is one of the most commonly used teaching strategies in the SVPDP classrooms. Indicative of this pattern, several SVPDP classes have routines and guidelines for effective cooperative learning. For example, in a classroom in Brooklyn, the researchers observed clearly defined roles for cooperative groups written on posters. Further, when the students were asked to form learning groups, each student assumed a designated role of facilitator, timekeeper, supplies manager, or note taker.[8] Generally, students appreciate the opportunity to work in groups. A student from Los Angeles commented, "I like this [U.S. history] class because I enjoy working in groups."[9] Several teachers also remarked, "Students like to work in groups."[10] However, not every student takes pleasure in cooperative learning. During a class in which students were sidetracked from the cooperative activity when the teacher did not provide direct supervision, one student complained, "I hate this group activity stuff."[11]

Most teachers praise the SVPDP's focus on discussion, because it allows all students, even the ones who lack reading and writing skills, to participate in lessons. Teachers explained that students like the SVPDP because they get to voice their own opinions instead of just regurgitating what is in the book.[12] A teacher from Queens commented, "Students want the [CCE] text. [They] seem interested. There is free, open discussion. I like it because it's not teacher-centered."[13] A student in Los Angeles explained that she enjoys her SVPDP U.S. history class because the students engage in a lot of discussion when they use *We the People*.[14] Additionally, the teachers are impressed with the quality of discussion that the SVPDP elicits. A teacher from Philadelphia said that the depth of the class discussion using *We the People* is amazing—that her students' knowledge and enthusiasm have surprised her.[15] Another Philadelphia teacher said that the CCE materials have challenged his students and spurred in them complicated, analytical questions about Constitutional law.[16] In Jefferson County, an SVPDP class had a two-day discussion on whether requiring middle school students to have a Hepatitis-B vaccine is an acceptable invasion of personal privacy. The teacher expressed excitement that the CCE materials could inspire such a high level of thinking and discussion. Even though it took a lot of class time, the teacher did not limit student discussion, because she did not want to waste an excellent teachable moment.[17] In summary, then, the SVPDP teachers generally embrace the program's priority on active student participation.

However, not every SVPDP teacher shares such enthusiastic support for the SVPDP's focus on discussion. A few teachers commented, for instance, that the lessons included in *We the People* are overly homogenous. One teacher told the researchers, "Read and discuss, read and discuss. That's all we ever do with it. There aren't enough activities or products to go with it."[18]

Student presentations are also emphasized in the SVPDP. Students seem to particularly enjoy practicing this skill. For instance, the SVPDP students in Philadelphia happily reported to researchers that they do more group work and presentations using the CCE materials than they have done before. A student in Los Angeles said she likes the

presentations and projects she is required to complete in an SVPDP history class.[19] Another student from Los Angeles said he appreciates making presentations because they give him opportunities "to learn by myself instead of the teacher telling me everything."[20] In Jefferson County, one teacher said that students especially enjoy the role-playing activities.[21]

Thus, the SVPDP curricular materials inspire the teacher methodologies—those centered on student participation—that many SVPDP teachers see as more effective in communicating SVPDP content. In addition, teaching techniques such as cooperative learning, classroom discussion, and student presentations allow students to practice the skills they need as citizens: collective action, reasoned discourse with peers, and the ability to communicate one's feelings and opinions. The majority of the SVPDP teachers appreciate the methodologies emphasized in the curricular materials.

Frequency of Use of SVPDP Curricular Materials

As table 6.3 shows, the average amount of time the first-year SVPDP teachers have allocated each week for the SVPDP materials varies widely.

Table 6.3
Average Hours per Week Devoted to SVPDP Curricular Materials

	Number of Teacher Responses			
District	Less than 1 Hour	1-2 hours	3-4 hours	5 or More Hours
Brooklyn	0	2	0	1
Denver	1	2	1	0
Jefferson County	0	3	7	7
Los Angeles	0	7	2	1
Philadelphia	0	3	4	2
Queens	1	8	0	0
Wake County	0	2	0	1
All Districts	2	27	14	12

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

More than half of the first-year SVPDP teachers responding to a project questionnaire reported that they use the program's materials two hours or less each week in their SVPDP classes. Twenty-five percent of the responding teachers allot three to four hours a week, and 21 percent report teaching five or more hours of the SVPDP each week. The amount of time spent on the SVPDP also varies within school districts. In Philadelphia, for example, some teachers use the SVPDP materials only one day per week. In contrast, other Philadelphia SVPDP teachers use the SVPDP materials on a daily basis, because they have been the only instructional materials available.[22] In Queens, one SVPDP teacher reported using the materials "one time a week, and [the students] wanted more."[23] Another teacher from Queens said she uses the CCE materials two to three times a week and the older district text the other days.[24] Despite such variation, in pilot districts where teachers spent five or more hours per week on the SVPDP, there were no teachers who spent the minimum (less than one hour) on the program.

Table 6.3 also shows differences among the school districts in the amount of time teachers spend on the SVPDP. Some SVPDP teachers noted to the researchers that school- or district-specific circumstances curtail the amount of instructional time they can allocate to the SVPDP materials. In Jefferson County, for example, most of the teachers reported that they spend at least three hours a week on the SVPDP. However, some teachers have not been able to do this because of a very strong school or district emphasis on literacy and math. Furthermore, some SVPDP teachers have found little time for social studies and science instruction because of demands associated with the Colorado Student Assessment Program.[25] Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, the SVPDP teachers in Jefferson County use the SVPDP far more frequently each week, on average, than their colleagues in Queens and Los Angeles. In Los Angeles, for instance, some teachers expressed to the researchers sentiments similar to those in Jefferson County, namely, they feel significant district and school pressure to dedicate more class time toward the improvement of student performance on the state standardized tests and less toward the implementation of the SVPDP.[26] This pressure appears to influence the SVPDP teachers in Los Angeles much more than those in Jefferson County.

Thus, the variation in the frequency with which the SVPDP materials are reported by SVPDP teachers to be used is greater *among* the pilot school districts than *within* them. This suggests that the circumstances of the particular districts and states, such as specific curricular and testing requirements, have an important influence on the amount of time teachers devote to the SVPDP. On the other hand, although SVPDP teachers in both Jefferson County and Los Angeles reported concerns about state standardized tests, their reported use of the SVPDP curricular materials differs. Therefore, factors other than testing may also influence teachers' decisions about how often to use the materials.

Completeness of SVPDP Implementation

The seven sites differ with respect to the amount of the SVPDP curriculum that is being implemented during the first year of the program. By March 2000, the majority of SVPDP teachers had completed between 40 and 60 percent of the SVPDP. Ten percent of the teachers reported completion of 20 percent of the SVPDP by that time, 16 percent reported having completed 30 percent of the program, and 14 percent reported having completed 80 percent of the SVPDP (see table 6.4).

Teachers at the seven sites have placed different levels of emphasis on the various CCE programs used in the SVPDP. In Wake County, for example, the SVPDP site coordinator said that the teachers are using *We the People* and *Project Citizen*. She expected all the teachers to be on schedule in using the lessons from these books and to complete both culminating activities by the end of the school year. However, she emphasized that it has been difficult for teachers to fit the *Foundations of Democracy* material into the SVPDP. She explained that the Wake County SVPDP teachers have had a tendency to slight this material because it has been presented as an optional part of the SVPDP and its content is not tested on the civic knowledge posttest. The site coordinator stated that it is only logical for the teachers to stress the material that is tested.[27] Similarly, by early March 2000 some Los Angeles SVPDP teachers had only taught a few lessons from *We the*

People, while others had taught several units, and at least one had completed all of the units and the culminating activity.[28] However, by that time none of the Los Angeles teachers had begun using *Project Citizen*, and the SVPDP site coordinator thought it unlikely that the teachers would use *Project Citizen* during the remainder of the 1999–2000 school year because they would be putting their time and energy into the *We the People* mock congressional hearings.[29]

Table 6.4
First-Year SVPDP Completion Percentages as of March 2000

	Number of Teacher Responses						
District	**0%**	**20%**	**30%**	**40%**	**60%**	**80%**	**100%**
Brooklyn	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
Denver	0	0	1	1	2	0	0
Jefferson County	0	0	1	3	5	8	0
Los Angeles	0	6	1	5	1	0	0
Philadelphia	0	0	1	2	5	0	0
Queens	0	0	5	4	0	0	0
Wake County	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
All Districts	0	6	9	16	18	8	0

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

As noted earlier, school and district conditions sometimes limit the amount of the SVPDP that teachers can complete. In addition, teachers find that the teaching methodologies recommended by the CCE can lessen the amount of the program materials completed. Because cooperative learning and class discussion encourage students to participate actively in the creation of their own learning environments, instead of passively receiving information through lectures, these strategies require more time in order to be effective. An SVPDP teacher in Jefferson County explained that she "plans lessons for one day, and they end up taking two because the kids want to discuss everything, and I don't like to cut them off."[30] In Wake County, SVPDP teachers agreed that the activities take a lot of time, and they find it difficult to know how much time to allot to one activity and when to move on to other SVPDP lessons.

Integration of the SVPDP Curricular Materials

One of the special challenges the teachers face is the integration of the SVPDP materials into the regular district and state curricular requirements. This section discusses the integration challenge, as well as examines SVPDP teachers' thoughts on integration and the support they receive in addressing problems of integration.

School District and State Curricular Requirements

SVPDP site coordinators in the pilot districts expressed confidence to the researchers that the SVPDP materials meet district and state curricular guidelines and instructional goals. Because the SVPDP has been implemented in classes that cover a variety of subjects, there is a question concerning how well the SVPDP fits into the curricular guidelines of

each pilot district. Not all SVPDP teachers are as confident as the site coordinators about the ease of this integration, however, which suggests that one cannot just assume that the SVPDP materials fulfill the district and state requirements.

School District Curricular Requirements

Generally, SVPDP site coordinators agree that the CCE materials complement their respective districts' curricular standards. For instance, the Queens SVPDP site coordinator told SVPDP teachers that the CCE materials mostly meet the district curriculum.[31] In Philadelphia, the SVPDP district contact, who also is the district social studies coordinator, said that the SVPDP fits under the district framework's "power, authority, and governance" section.[32] He also said that for the school principals to buy into the program, he has to prove to them that the SVPDP fits into the district curriculum.[33] Although the LAUSD does not have a district curriculum for eighth-grade U. S. history, the Los Angeles SVPDP participants believe that the goals of the SVPDP align with the goals of the district. For instance, under the auspices of a grant from the Annenberg Los Angeles Metropolitan Project, certain school clusters within the district emphasize teacher training in the areas of civic education, parental involvement, and technology.[34]

Jefferson County is unique in that it is attempting to infuse the CCE materials throughout the K-12 social studies curricula, and the district social studies team is working to include the CCE materials in the instructional materials it is writing. The social studies team decided to teach the SVPDP this year primarily in sixth-grade classes, because sixth-grade students study the part of American history that includes the writing of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Sixth graders also study the Western Hemisphere in the second half of the year, and the SVPDP site coordinator hopes that they can apply what they have learned about civics to other countries as well as to the United States. The SVPDP teachers believe that the material in *Foundations of Democracy*—particularly the unit on authority—addresses key issues in the district's sixth-grade curriculum. The fifth graders in the combined fifth- and sixth-grade classes that are participating in the SVPDP cover the colonial and Revolutionary periods. Although the Jefferson County SVPDP participants do not believe that the program materials fit as well in the fifth grade as they do in the sixth grade, the SVPDP teachers at both grade levels are working hard to infuse the SVPDP materials.[35] Jefferson County mandates that 80 percent of the instruction in each school must be based on the district's standards, but 20 percent is up to the discretion of the individual school. Therefore, the district staff tries to sell *Project Citizen* by pointing out that it is a way to fill some of that 20 percent, because it wants the schools to choose to use *Project Citizen*.[36]

Thus, specific district curricular requirements rarely seem to present a problem for SVPDP participants. Even in Jefferson County, where teachers are aggressively attempting to extend the SVPDP throughout grades K-12, participants appear to be having a high degree of success in meeting the district curricular requirements.

State Curricular Requirements

Although some of the SVPDP pilot districts are not required to follow state curricular requirements because of state policies supporting the local control of schools, these requirements remain important concerns in most SVPDP districts.

Even though the Los Angeles Unified School District has curricular standards for fourth-, seventh-, and eleventh-grade social studies classes, it does not use its own standards for eighth-grade American history. Instead, the district uses the California standards, which focus on U.S. history and geography. While the CCE materials complement the state's content requirements, the SVPDP teachers worry about the integration of the CCE's materials with the state requirements. The teachers emphasized to the researchers that the California students learn the bulk of U.S. history in eighth grade. In addition, according to the California K-12 social studies framework, students learn some U.S. history in fifth grade, a little in the eighth grade, and a little in the eleventh grade. However, the SVPDP teachers said that students cannot be expected to remember what they have learned from the fifth to the eighth to the eleventh grade. Because of the number of years separating instruction in U.S. history, the eighth-grade teachers reported that they must spend a large amount of time reviewing previously learned content. One Los Angeles SVPDP teacher said, "The only exposure students get to U.S. history is in the eighth grade, unless they go to college."[37] For this reason, the SVPDP teachers feel pressured to complete as much of the state curriculum as possible, leaving less time for the SVPDP lessons.

In the Wake County Public School System, state law requires eighth graders to take North Carolina history within the context of U.S. history. Some SVPDP teachers believe the CCE materials fit well, while others believe that the SVPDP includes too much additional material. The Wake County district social studies coordinator believes that there is room to incorporate the SVPDP materials into the eighth grade and that the CCE materials fit well with the required social studies curriculum. On the other hand, the SVPDP site coordinator expressed the view that the SVPDP materials would fit better into the ninth-grade course on economics, law, and politics, although she was not sure how difficult this would be due to statewide testing at the ninth-grade level.[38]

Similarly, students in Queens and Brooklyn must take the New York state social studies examination at the end of the eighth grade. Because of this test, the participating New York City sites must follow strict curriculum guidelines in efforts to prepare students. However, the social studies test is being reviewed during the 1999–2000 school year and, thus, has not been administered.[39] An assistant principal from Queens noted that the school board is "revamping the social studies test—we are relieved of it for the moment."[40] Thus, SVPDP teachers in Queens and Brooklyn have had some flexibility in the integration of the program's curriculum.

In general, state curricular requirements appear to be stricter and to pose a greater challenge to the implementation of the SVPDP than district requirements. Many SVPDP district participants are uncertain whether the SVPDP materials comply with the state requirements and lack confidence about how to fit the program into these requirements. As the researchers observed in the New York sites, when SVPDP teachers and other

participants are faced with statewide high-stakes student assessments, they feel pressure to sacrifice the SVPDP materials to ensure that the state requirements are met. At the same time, those districts that have recognized greater possibilities for the integration of the SVPDP materials generally also have had greater district administrative support for the SVPDP.

Teachers' Perceptions on SVPDP Integration

Within and across participating districts, SVPDP teachers expressed diverse opinions about the SVPDP integration process. Some teachers have integrated the SVPDP effortlessly, while others have had difficulty simultaneously meeting the goals of the SVPDP and their district or state requirements. In general, however, SVPDP teachers reported that they believe they are relatively free to use the CCE materials in their classes (see table 6.5).

Table 6.5
SVPDP Teachers' Perceptions of Freedom to Use CCE Curricular Materials

	Number of Teacher Responses						
District	1 (Not Free)	2	3	4	5	6	7 (Very Free)
Brooklyn	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Denver	0	0	2	0	1	1	0
Jefferson County	0	4	0	2	6	4	0
Los Angeles	0	0	0	0	3	4	6
Philadelphia	0	0	0	1	0	4	3
Queens	0	0	1	3	1	0	3
Wake County	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
All Districts	0	4	3	6	13	13	16

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

Teachers who feel free to use their professional judgment in selecting SVPDP lessons that complement their course outline reported few concerns. On the other hand, those who feel pressured to follow the SVPDP curriculum outline checklist prescribed by the CCE expressed more anxiety about time constraints and the extra workload. However, other factors also generate teacher stress: school and district circumstances, standardized testing, and the subject matter taught.

Some SVPDP teachers are quite comfortable making decisions about which SVPDP lessons to integrate into the subject matter of their regular courses. They select only the lessons that best emphasize the key concepts students need to know for the culminating activities. These teachers view the expectations for SVPDP implementation as rather flexible, which they appreciate. In Los Angeles, for example, one teacher noted that it is important for teachers to have a sense of freedom and do only what they feel is possible. Another teacher concurred that the October 1999 checklist distributed by the CCE is daunting. He stated, "We should use our professional judgment throughout the implementation of the SVPDP."[41]

In some sites, SVPDP teachers have chosen to delete material from their district curriculum instead of from the SVPDP. This has been the case in Jefferson County. One teacher said, "Jefferson County wants us to do all the civics in six weeks—no way! But the kids really like it and still are not bored with it." She feels that in order to do the SVPDP correctly, she has to slight the regular curriculum: "Social studies and science are what we always give up if there's something else to do." [42] Other SVPDP teachers mentioned that they have sacrificed the depth of analysis of some district subject matter with their students in order to implement the SVPDP. They also regret having to cut off some of the long, but valuable, discussion that the SVPDP fosters in the classroom. Because they are teaching in an upper elementary school setting, however, these teachers can integrate the CCE lessons during other parts of the school day. Still, all of the Jefferson County SVPDP teachers and administrators have resigned themselves to the fact that they are unable to finish the entire SVPDP because of conflicts with the district curriculum.[43]

Other SVPDP teachers, however, are not as comfortable integrating the SVPDP into the district curricular requirements. Instead, they are experiencing frustration toward the CCE and its expectations of SVPDP teachers. At one 1999–2000 Denver teacher training workshop, one SVPDP teacher said, "This is virtually impossible," and another expressed "great anxiety when I think about the culminating activity."[44] Another teacher added that had he more clearly understood the requirements of the program in the beginning, he "never would have done this."[45] In Wake County, one SVPDP teacher said that the money the CCE pays SVPDP teachers to be a part of the program is insignificant, because "I had been told that [the SVPDP] would go with the [district's] curriculum. Now, we are told we have to do this, and we have to do that."[46]

Across the pilot districts, teachers also reported being overwhelmed and pressured because of specific school or district circumstances. At a training workshop in Queens, the most distressed teacher expressed difficulty in finding time to integrate the CCE materials into her regular course content. Referring to school and district standards, she said, "I just don't have time for this." [47] Another teacher from Queens reported, "I am on explorers and need to get students to the Constitution—it is crazy!"[48] At a middle school in Los Angeles, SVPDP teachers are torn between using the CCE materials or the district's brand new, and long-awaited, U.S. history textbooks. Because they are committed to using both sets of materials, they reported feeling overburdened by switching from book to book. This feeling was still true to some extent in February 2000, although by then some of the Los Angeles SVPDP teachers were more comfortable using the U.S. history text as a research tool.[49]

SVPDP teachers who are integrating the SVPDP materials into courses other than social studies tended to express difficulty with this integration. Two English teachers who are implementing the SVPDP in Queens seemed particularly stressed. One of them said, "It's slow going. I have my English curriculum, and I'm weaving [the SVPDP curriculum] in. I know I'm behind, and I'm concerned we're not going to have enough time. Sometimes we break down in groups—but it is a real time issue."[50] Further, at a teacher training workshop, an SVPDP reading teacher from Queens said she is having

difficulty finding ways to implement the SVPDP in conjunction with the reading curriculum.[51]

Some teachers believe that the SVPDP requires too much to be a supplemental program. Two Los Angeles teachers said that the SVPDP is "a complete program in itself" and that it should be taught as a separate course. They both suggested that it be taught either as a 16-week course or as a shorter summer school course.[52] Furthermore, one teacher said that the SVPDP materials are "not meant to be plugged in."[53] Another SVPDP teacher in Los Angeles expressed to the researchers that the CCE should make the program more concise for it to be truly supplemental. She believes that not all of the lessons are integral, and perhaps the CCE should eliminate some of those. Another teacher commented that if teachers were to teach everything CCE recommends, they would have to drop everything else.[54]

Thus, while SVPDP teachers generally are positive about the integration of the SVPDP materials into the regular curriculum, they often are less confident than the SVPDP site coordinators about the ease of this integration. The teachers feel pressure to sacrifice elements either in the SVPDP or in the district and state curriculum in order to meet the requirements of both, and it is difficult for them to decide what and how much, if anything, to disregard.

Teachers' Support for SVPDP Integration

Some SVPDP participants found ways to alleviate SVPDP teachers' concerns about the integration of the CCE materials. Indeed, it appeared to the researchers that teacher anxiety about the SVPDP integration is often a function of the site coordinators' expectations and flexibility. In districts in which the SVPDP site coordinator or the district social studies coordinator is flexible in his or her expectations, the teachers seem to have lower anxiety levels. Because most SVPDP site coordinators and social studies coordinators in the pilot districts are very familiar with the CCE materials used in the SVPDP, they have been flexible in their expectations and have provided the teachers with useful technical assistance. Some have been trainers for *We the People*, *Project Citizen*, and *Foundations of Democracy*, and all are strong advocates of the SVPDP materials. The site coordinators' and district social studies coordinators' familiarity with these materials enables them to offer assistance to SVPDP teachers through the preparation of an integration matrix or one-on-one help.

In Los Angeles, for example, the SVPDP site coordinator responded to the teachers' concerns by telling them that they have flexibility in teaching the CCE materials. She said that they should feel free to adapt lessons or to select only those that are appropriate for their students: "After all, this is an experimental project, and your role is to implement the curriculum and give feedback; [you are] to indicate what worked, what didn't work, and what should be changed for next year."[55] However, she did stress the importance of trying to integrate during the year as many of the topics and lessons on the CCE curriculum outline checklist as possible. For example, if teachers feel they cannot possibly undertake the entire CCE version of the *We the People* mock congressional

hearing, they should feel perfectly comfortable doing a scaled-down version in their own classrooms.

In Philadelphia, the SVPDP district contact, Melvin Garrison, told teachers that they are completely free to decide how to integrate the SVPDP and to select relevant lessons. He stressed, though, that every teacher must complete the *We the People* culminating activity.[56]

In Queens, the SVPDP site coordinator is willing to support teachers in any manner necessary. The coordinator told one concerned teacher that it is okay if she could not complete each lesson in full, and that she could easily adjust by giving students an overview of some sections. Another Queens teacher told the site coordinator that she feels pressured by her principal, who is very strict about following the district curriculum to the letter. The teacher believes that, by using the CCE materials, she is getting behind on the district curriculum. The site coordinator offered to be a liaison and suggested that she could speak with the teacher's principal.[57] Further, the site coordinator is very willing to take an active role in helping teachers integrate the SVPDP into their subject matter. When she heard a reading teacher say, "It is difficult to implement [the SVPDP] into the reading curriculum. We've got to align this to the reading curriculum," she immediately offered to help her align the materials with the district reading curriculum (or just to do it for her).[58] The site coordinator suggested that she could help SVPDP teachers design courses to meet the district's curriculum objectives while using the CCE materials. She also told teachers that she would attempt to match up the CCE materials and the teachers' individual lessons in language arts so that they could be integrated—even if she had to "re-read all of the books!"[59] For example, she told teachers that authority, power, and justice could be used in a lesson on *Animal Farm*.[60]

The SVPDP site coordinators' suggestions to prepare integration matrices or outlines has been instrumental in relieving SVPDP teachers' anxiety. At a few of the sites, teachers are taking the lead in constructing documents that show how the CCE lessons fit into their district or state curriculum. In Wake County, one teacher has used the CCE materials for many years. She put together a matrix showing where each lesson in the *We the People* text fits in with the North Carolina curriculum.[61] In Brooklyn, some SVPDP teachers and the district social studies coordinator formed a task force in fall 1999 to address the SVPDP integration challenge. The task force consists of two experienced teachers and the district social studies coordinator. The teachers have worked after school to plan 16 lessons encompassing five social studies units. The goal of the curriculum task force has been to align the format of the *We the People* lessons with state and city standards to ensure that the standards can be met by using the integrated lesson plans. This task force initiative has laid the integration groundwork; the next step is to make the lesson plans teacher- and student-friendly.[62] Similarly, the Denver Public Schools has prepared an integration matrix showing how the SVPDP curricular materials complement the district's history and geography standards and the Colorado civics standards.[63]

Some of the other SVPDP pilot sites plan to create integration guides during summer 2000. In Jefferson County, the district social studies staff is aware of the time constraints arising from the SVPDP integration into the district social studies curriculum. They are planning to hire some of the 1999–2000 SVPDP teachers to help work on some of these alignment issues during the district's curriculum rewriting process.[64]

Thus, even though integrating the SVPDP materials into the regular curricular requirements seems to be a daunting task, a concerted effort to provide guidance to program participants can greatly aid SVPDP implementation. The SVPDP site coordinators can convey the confidence they feel about integrating the SVPDP curriculum to anxious teachers, while SVPDP teachers can build their own confidence by mapping out their own strategies for integration.

Participants' Assessment of the SVPDP Curricular Materials

The CCE materials used in the SVPDP are as critical to the success of the program as the teaching techniques used by SVPDP teachers. This section examines SVPDP teachers' and students' assessment of the SVPDP curricular materials. It also looks at the logistics of distributing the materials to the participating teachers.

General Responses to CCE Materials

Overall, teachers and students in all of the SVPDP sites like the CCE texts very much. At each site, several teachers said that they and their students consider the CCE texts to be a welcome break from the district's regular textbooks. For example, one SVPDP student in Queens said, "Instead of telling you things like other history books, this [CCE] book gives ideas."[65] Indeed, some of the SVPDP teachers are grateful simply to have books that are not outdated and worn-out. At one Philadelphia school, the CCE books have been especially important because a flood at the beginning of the 1999–2000 school year destroyed many instructional materials, and the CCE books have been the only ones available to teachers and students.[66] Teachers and students made many comments to the researchers regarding the SVPDP materials, specifically in reference to the organization and content, teacher guides, reading level, suitability for LEP students, cartoon illustrations, and supplemental visual resources. Several of these comments follow.

Organization and Content

Many SVPDP teachers and students agree that the program's student books are organized well and contain useful and relevant content. Teachers in Los Angeles told researchers that the CCE materials are well-written, well-organized, and well-structured. A student in Queens said, "I like how it summarizes the stories and at the end [asks] questions."[67] Many teachers mentioned that the quality of the CCE materials, coupled with the fact that they have been provided free to the teachers during the first year of the SVPDP, motivated them to participate in the program. In Philadelphia, the SVPDP site coordinator said that the content of the CCE materials gives teachers a firm base for understanding the foundations of government.[68] He said that this is important, because Pennsylvania middle school teachers are not required to be certified in a specific content

area; as a result, they usually earn a general certification, and "social studies at the eighth-grade level is dying."[69] He thinks that the CCE materials make teachers' jobs easier by providing a knowledge base in civics.[70]

Teachers and students both commented that something as simple as the external look and feel of the CCE materials is important. For example, SVPDP teachers in Philadelphia believe that one reason their students really like *We the People* is because the book is small, soft-backed, and contains cartoon illustrations. One teacher commented that his students like the CCE books because they "are not the same old, big, heavy textbooks."[71] In addition, the teachers appreciate that the students always remember to bring their CCE books to class, because they are not as big and heavy as the usual textbooks.[72]

SVPDP teachers in other pilot districts echoed these positive views about the importance of the subject matter of the CCE texts in enhancing the social studies and civic learning of their students. A teacher in Queens said, "I think the information in [*We the People*] is so important."[73] The SVPDP teachers in Los Angeles said that the CCE materials are excellent and add to their students' understanding of government and civics. Specifically, one teacher commented that the materials "are a great resource" and "are especially great for teaching government in the colonial period."[74] Though most teachers liked the content of the SVPDP materials, some Wake County teachers added that, for a first-year teacher, they might be overwhelming.[75] These teachers said the concepts are difficult, and while students learn something valuable, it is hard to teach about the U.S. Constitution.

The content and organization of the CCE materials do challenge SVPDP students, and perhaps some SVPDP teachers. However, almost all SVPDP teachers agree that the civics content of these SVPDP materials is essential for their students' development as learners and responsible citizens. Indeed, overall, SVPDP teachers and students appreciate very much the organizations, ideas, and usability of the CCE materials.

Teacher Resource Materials

On the other hand, SVPDP teachers in several of the pilot sites said that the teacher guides for the CCE materials are inadequate and not very useful. For example, in Jefferson County, a few teachers would like the teacher guides to be more traditional. Specifically, they would like the teacher guide for each of the CCE programs to include the entire student text for that program as well. These teachers find it confusing to flip back and forth between the teacher and student books. One teacher said that she would also like the teacher guides to include suggestions for wrapping up the lessons that go beyond the final questions in the current manuals—she generally finds these questions obvious and not helpful or creative. She likes the way that the teacher guide for the *Foundations of Democracy* book includes "words to know" at the beginning of each chapter, and she recommends that the *We the People* guide do the same. In general, she found the layout and writing style of the *Foundations of Democracy* guide better than that of the *We the People* guide.[76]

Other SVPDP teachers echoed these views that the CCE teacher manuals do not provide enough background material for the SVPDP and are inconvenient to use. One teacher in Queens told the researchers, "I spent more time doing homework with *We the People* than anything—[the CCE] needs a good teacher guide with answers."[77] One Los Angeles SVPDP teacher suggested that the CCE integrate the guides for *We the People*, *Foundations of Democracy*, and *Project Citizen* into one booklet of use to SVPDP teachers so that they do not have to look in three different books.[78]

Two Jefferson County SVPDP teachers suggested that the CCE provide additional supplementary teacher materials. One teacher told the researchers that she would like the CCE to provide SVPDP teachers in her district with some kind of chart or matrix that shows how the CCE texts fit with state and district standards and curricula. She noted that other school text publishers do this and does not see why the CCE cannot do the same.[79] Another SVPDP teacher would appreciate having a complete matrix showing those *Foundations of Democracy* lessons that work well with or are applicable to the *We the People* text. She has found many connections, but only after the appropriate teaching moment has passed or after wasting a lot of time searching through both sets of CCE materials. Thus, a comprehensive outline would save a great deal of time.[80]

At the same time, however, several SVPDP teachers find the CCE teacher guides to be great resources. Some Denver teachers told the researchers that they appreciate the easy lesson plans, simple support materials (i.e., student handouts), and colorful illustrations. One teacher commented, "The set curriculum helps me organize it all. The help with activities is great!"[81] Some SVPDP teachers commented that the teacher guides reduce their preparation and planning time; they do not have to create the lessons through which they integrate the SVPDP and the regular curriculum. This is the view of a teacher from Jefferson County, who commented that she likes the CCE books because she does not have to spend a lot of time making up her own lessons. Instead, she has more time for other topics and activities.[82] Thus, many SVPDP teachers have positive things to say about the CCE materials.

Nevertheless, judging from the comments of some SVPDP teachers in all the pilot sites, there is room for improvement in the CCE teacher guides. However, a few simple changes, such as including the student text in the teacher guide for each CCE program, would go a long way toward alleviating the teachers' concerns about SVPDP teacher resource materials.

Appropriateness of Reading Level

Because the SVPDP is taught to students with a wide range of academic abilities, the SVPDP teachers have differing opinions about the appropriateness of the reading level in the CCE materials. Most teachers find that the CCE's Level II books are completely suitable for their students. For example, a teacher from Los Angeles told the researchers that he thought the reading level of the *Foundations of Democracy* text is appropriate for his students. He commented that some of his students read above that level and some read below it, but, for the majority, the reading level is a good fit.[83] In Jefferson County,

the SVPDP teachers reported that the reading level of the *We the People* Level II material is not too hard for sixth-grade students.[84]

Many SVPDP teachers feel that the CCE Level II books are more readable than their regular course textbooks. In fact, several teachers commented that it is difficult to move students back into the required textbooks after using the CCE materials, because they find it easier to read the CCE texts. In Queens, an SVPDP teacher said, "I was using both [the district-bought text and the CCE text]. [The students] said, 'No, use only [the CCE text].'"[85] Another Queens teacher reported that his eighth-grade students really like the CCE books, with their accessible language, better than their other texts. In Denver, the SVPDP teachers' consensus is that the students enjoy the CCE materials much more than the regular text, which they view as very "wordy."[86] "They're really getting into it!" said one teacher.[87] As SVPDP students in Queens told the researchers, "It's simple"; "I like how it summarizes the stories, and at the end it has questions"; and "The stories are easy to understand."[88] One Los Angeles student likes the language in the CCE materials because it is easier to understand than that in the "regular, big textbook."[89]

SVPDP teachers who work with special-needs students, however, often reported that the CCE Level II texts are too difficult for their students. In Denver, remedial education students are integrated into "average" classrooms, resulting in classes with mixed reading levels. The teachers in these classrooms commented that the Level II vocabulary is difficult for some of their students.[90] For example, one class has students whose reading skills range from very low to very high, with seven special education students. The teacher told researchers, "The level of required reading [in the Level II texts] is too high for my students."[91] In Brooklyn, many teachers are using the Level I version of *We the People*. In one school, for example, 90 percent of the students are not reading at grade level.[92] The special education classes in Brooklyn that are in the SVPDP also use the CCE Level I texts. Thus, student compositions of some SVPDP classes have necessitated the use of CCE texts having a reading level lower than the ones originally planned for those classes.

On the whole, the SVPDP participants feel the reading levels of the CCE materials used in the program are appropriate. It is important to note, however, that teachers have the discretion to select CCE texts that best match the reading level for their classes. It would be usual for teachers to use Level I texts for elementary classes and Level II texts for middle school classes. But, given the special needs of some students, it is important that the SVPDP teachers be able to choose their CCE materials based their students' reading levels.

English Language Learners

The problem of selecting CCE books with appropriate reading levels often occurs when the SVPDP classroom includes English language learners, or limited English proficiency (LEP) students. The SVPDP teachers who work with these students reported that they encountered difficulties using the CCE Level II books. Several of these teachers have used the CCE Level I books instead, in order to make the materials more manageable for their students, while others have used various bilingual instruction techniques.

One teacher in Community School District 30 (Queens), for example, first clarifies the SVPDP concepts in English and then largely repeats that clarification in Spanish.[93] At a teacher training workshop in Queens, a bilingual education teacher explained one of the strategies that her students use to learn vocabulary: "They look up words as homework—for example, with power and authority, they create a semantic map to help themselves learn the vocabulary."[94] A second teacher in Queens said, "I use pictures and also let them use a textbook in Spanish. [My students] love to talk about government and what's going on. They take it and apply it to the government of their own country."[95] Another Queens SVPDP teacher brought to a teacher training workshop a copy of the U.S. Constitution for everyone—in every language.[96] In Los Angeles, a teacher uses specific "sheltering" techniques to reinforce the SVPDP concepts for his LEP students. The sheltering techniques include speaking very slowly, repeating himself often, and rereading certain sections of the *We the People* book to his students.[97]

The SVPDP teachers of English language learners expressed difficulty implementing the program and suggested that the CCE translate all the SVPDP materials into other languages, especially Spanish. In one classroom the researchers observed, language was the greatest barrier to implementing the SVPDP. Had the *Foundations of Democracy* materials on authority and power, and their differences, been in Spanish, the class members would have had an easier time comprehending the material and completing the exercises.[98] As with providing the CCE teacher guides, a small investment in providing translations of the CCE materials may make a vast difference in the successful implementation of the SVPDP in classes with English language learners.

Importance of Cartoons and Illustrations

Teachers at every SVPDP site agreed that the cartoon illustrations in the CCE books are one of their best features. In Wake County, the SVPDP teachers said that the cartoons lighten the classroom mood and serve as a good segue into studying political cartoons as part of current events. One teacher complimented the CCE on the cartoons, saying that they "are like a bad commercial—you remember them."[99] In Los Angeles, the SVPDP teachers said that the students especially enjoy the CCE books because of the lively pictures and cartoons. When students do not have time to read all the curricular materials, the pictures help them understand the SVPDP content.[100] Other SVPDP teachers emphasized that the illustrations are especially useful for students with limited English proficiency. One bilingual teacher from Queens told the researchers, "Everything you need is in the pictures."[101]

In speaking with the researchers, the SVPDP students affirmed their teachers' belief that they really enjoyed the cartoons. One Los Angeles student said that she really gets a kick out of the cartoons and drawings in the CCE materials.[102] A student from Brooklyn remarked that "lessons with pictures are more fun."[103] A student from Queens said, "We like the cartoons. They are funny!"[104] In Philadelphia, another student explained, "The books are good, because they have humor."[105]

Thus, in their cartoons and illustrations, the CCE materials make use of a particularly effective technique to reach the students participating in the SVPDP. The majority of the

SVPDP teachers agree that, through the cartoons and illustrations, the SVPDP is able to tap into students' ability to learn through means other than the printed word.

Supplemental Visual Resources

Several SVPDP teachers expressed an interest in having access to even more visual resources through which to reinforce the lessons in the CCE texts. For example, in Jefferson County, one teacher mentioned that better visual aids would make the program more sustainable. She would like some videos illustrating the *We the People* content.[106] Another teacher in Jefferson County agreed, saying that videos would provide a change of pace for the SVPDP students and another avenue for accessing the information.[107] The Jefferson County SVPDP teachers thought posters would also be helpful. The CCE did send each SVPDP teacher a collection of "Prejudice is Foul Play" posters from the Anti-Defamation League; the Jefferson County teachers do not find them particularly colorful or eye-catching, however, and at least one SVPDP teacher is not using them.[108]

In Brooklyn and Queens, the researchers noted that other visual representations of the lessons in the CCE texts were effective. One of the Brooklyn SVPDP teachers has made overhead projector transparencies of the cartoons in the CCE books. This strategy seems to work well, and the students enjoy the enhanced use of the cartoon illustrations. One of this teacher's students told the researchers, "I like the big picture overheads."[109] In one Queens SVPDP classroom, the teacher uses a diagram (with Spanish words) to visually describe the relationship between *poder* (power) and *autoridad* (authority). The teacher then refers to the diagram to begin a discussion on power and authority in New York politics.[110]

The SVPDP teachers expressed to the researchers a need for supplemental visual resources for the SVPDP. They see visual resources as an extension of the innovative spirit that characterizes SVPDP curricular materials, and they would like to see the CCE do more to take advantage of the potential instructional power of SVPDP visual resources. The SVPDP teachers are not critical of the CCE materials; rather, they are seeking ways to implement the SVPDP even more effectively.

Distribution of CCE Materials

In some of the first-year SVPDP districts, problems with the distribution of the CCE texts have apparently slowed the implementation of the program. These problems appear to have been caused by miscommunication between site coordinators and the CCE.

In Jefferson County and Queens, some SVPDP teachers reported that they have not had enough books to make a full class set. For example, a Jefferson County teacher told the researchers that because she has 30 students but only 15 books, she must make every assignment collaborative, even when individual work would be more appropriate.[111]

Other SVPDP districts have experienced delays in getting the CCE materials to the teachers on a timely basis. In Denver, several teachers were disappointed when the texts arrived after the school year had begun. This delayed the implementation of the program

and forced teachers to "catch up" by introducing the program where it may not have fit best.[112] An SVPDP teacher in Los Angeles expressed a feeling of "being overwhelmed" when he read the materials, given his many other school responsibilities. He suggested that he could have planned more effectively to carry out the program during the year if he had received the CCE materials earlier.[113]

In Philadelphia, only a couple of the SVPDP teachers at the district's November 1999 teacher training workshop had received the teacher guides for the SVPDP materials. The boxes of materials sent from the CCE to Philadelphia apparently had not contained these guides.[114] At the February 2000 Philadelphia teacher training workshop, the SVPDP teachers were still without the teacher guides. Moreover, none of them had received the questions for the *We the People* culminating activity or the *We the People* certificates of participation for their students. To address this problem, the SVPDP site representatives gave the SVPDP teachers photocopies of sections of the *We the People* teacher guide and the congressional hearing questions at the training workshop.[115]

In both Los Angeles and Philadelphia, the SVPDP teachers are under the impression that students can keep the CCE materials. These teachers allow their students to write in the books and take them home, and they have said that the students can keep the books at the end of the year. The teachers at both sites agreed that the students really enjoy having their own books and using them as they wish. When the researchers asked the Los Angeles SVPDP site coordinator about this, she expressed concern, since the teachers are supposed to collect the books from the students at the end of the year.[116] In contrast, the Philadelphia SVPDP district contact reported to the SVPDP teachers in that district that their students could keep their materials and that the CCE will send new books to each SVPDP teacher every year, even if he or she has participated in the program in a previous year.[117]

Effective implementation of the SVPDP requires that the SVPDP teachers receive sufficient CCE materials on a timely basis. Therefore, delays in the delivery of the materials, or the delivery of inadequate numbers of texts, can hamper the progress of the program by limiting the time that the teachers have to prepare, and by diminishing the value that the students can derive from the materials. In no way did the researchers gain the impression that problems in the delivery of the CCE materials were widespread during 1999–2000; nevertheless, each such problem can have a negative effect on SVPDP implementation in the site experiencing the problem, and should be addressed.

SVPDP Culminating Activities

The SVPDP classroom texts and printed materials communicate the content of the program, but key opportunities for students to put their knowledge into practice occur through the program's culminating activities. This section examines the expectations and intended outcomes associated with these activities; analyzes the preparation that goes into them and the participation of SVPDP students, teachers, and others in them; and describes the SVPDP participants' responses to the culminating activities.

Expectations and Intended Outcomes

For several reasons, the CCE considers the culminating activities of *We the People* and *Project Citizen* to be a critically important component of the SVPDP. First, the culminating activities provide students with opportunities to display the knowledge and skills that they have learned through the SVPDP. Second, the culminating activities serve as excellent performance-assessment tools for teachers. Third, they are events in which parents and community members can be involved in schools; they also provide excellent opportunities for schools to receive positive publicity about their students' civic engagement. Moreover, the culminating activities create settings in which students can express themselves and be heard on community public policy problems.

Most of the first-year SVPDP site coordinators share the CCE's rationale. In Queens, for example, the site coordinator considers the *We the People* mock congressional hearing and the *Project Citizen* portfolio activity necessary for the successful implementation of the SVPDP.[118] In Philadelphia, the SVPDP district contact also expects teachers to complete the mock congressional hearing and showcase student performance to the community. The SVPDP site coordinator is in contact with Philadelphia community and civic leaders to elicit their assistance with the hearings. The site coordinator said that the teachers fill out a "class hearing form" that outlines what is expected in the class competition, and sign a written pledge to do the culminating activity. Philadelphia's SVPDP district contact has made it clear to the teachers that participation in the classroom competitions and selection of a class team is mandatory.[119]

Not all SVPDP site coordinators agree that the culminating activities should be framed as a competition, however. The SVPDP site coordinator in Jefferson County, for example, does not like the idea of competition as a way of teaching citizenship. He also thinks that elementary school students are too young for competitions. Thus, he asks the SVPDP teachers to do the *We the People* hearing, but not in a competitive setting or in a public forum. Another Jefferson County official endorses the site coordinator's position, saying that she prefers to see this event as a performance assessment and a celebration of the children's work rather than as a competition.[120] It should be noted, however, that the age of the SVPDP students in Jefferson County—as fifth and sixth graders, they are the youngest participants in the first year of the SVPDP—has been a factor influencing the Jefferson County attitudes toward the SVPDP culminating activities.

Overall, first-year SVPDP participants have expressed very positive expectations for the culminating activities. Although not everyone has agreed on how the activities should be conducted or how the results should be used, participants in all the pilot districts agree that the activities themselves could have great value for their students.

Preparation for the Culminating Activities

During 1999–2000, the SVPDP teachers received intensive training on how to organize a *We the People* mock congressional hearing and how to prepare a *Project Citizen* portfolio, as well as how to help their students prepare for their presentations. The SVPDP site coordinators, aware of teacher needs, have invited local and national experts

on the CCE culminating activities to lead sessions at the teacher training workshops in each district. These workshops have focused on the logistics of the culminating activities, and on strategies for building student presentation and research skills.

For example, at the February 2000 teacher training workshop in Philadelphia, the SVPDP district contact explained in detail the *We the People* culminating activity and distributed copies of the CCE's sample mock congressional hearing questions, the hearing score sheet, and response sheets. He told the teachers that it is completely acceptable to show students the types of questions they will encounter in the *We the People* competition. Because it could be too unwieldy to have all of the students participate in a single hearing, he suggested to the SVPDP teachers that they conduct "mini-competitions" in their classrooms. Each teacher would then pick a student from each unit, for a total of six students, for the class team that continues on to the citywide culminating activity. Each student receives a certificate of appreciation for doing the classroom competition, and each participating student receives a plaque for the citywide competition. The winning citywide school and students receive additional recognition. The SVPDP district contact and site coordinator work together to select a team of judges and finalize a time and place for the competition. They also push for media coverage of the event.[121]

An SVPDP teacher training workshop in Los Angeles focused more on how the teachers could actually coach their students. The SVPDP site coordinator invited Ken Rodriguez, CCE director of curriculum development, to talk with the teachers about his own experience working with fifth-grade LEP students in Bell Gardens Middle School on the *We the People* mock congressional hearing. He acknowledged that the language issue poses some challenges for LEP students, but he stressed that using the SVPDP helps the students develop language skills. Rodriguez shared some of the teaching strategies he used with this class and then showed the teachers a video of the congressional hearing. The students performed well and demonstrated a thorough understanding of the *We the People* questions and concepts. Rodriguez's point was that all students can excel in a congressional hearing, regardless of age, language skills, or disabilities—and this point was well-received by the workshop participants.

During the first-year SVPDP implementation, the teachers in the pilot districts have used a variety of strategies to introduce the mock congressional hearing and prepare their students for a commendable presentation. A teacher in Los Angeles, for example, used the C-SPAN network as an example when introducing the congressional hearing activity to her students. The students became nervous at the idea of doing a public presentation, but the teacher reassured them by saying, "I know you all can handle getting out a good presentation in two and a half weeks."[122] To put the students at ease about the type of questions they would answer in the congressional hearing, she said, "I promise that you will not be asked any questions that you do not know the answers to. You will be able to prepare beforehand with me as your coach."[123] By the end of this class session, the students were excited, even asking their teacher if they should dress up for the occasion.

In Jefferson County, an SVPDP teacher offered advice to her whole class on conducting hearings. She reminded the students of the importance of doing a good job, because

important members of the community would be present at the hearing as panelists. Among the panelists would be the mayor of Wheat Ridge, Lakewood's chief presiding judge, the district's representative to the Colorado legislature, the head of the school's PTA, and a former member of the school board. A reporter from a small Wheat Ridge newspaper would also be covering the event. The teacher recommended to the students that they put their speaking points on note cards, because it looks "more professional than notebook paper."[124] She reminded them that there are time limits on how long they can speak, but she also said that if they speak for too short a time, "you'll look like your knowledge isn't very deep."[125] She suggested to them that it might be a good idea to use in their congressional hearing remarks the *We the People* vocabulary words they had learned. She also reminded the students that the hearings were to be their own work and opinions, and that, while she was willing to help, "it's your responsibility to find the right information and to go back to the book and find references."[126]

For the most part, the first-year SVPDP students worked very conscientiously to prepare for and participate in the SVPDP mock congressional hearings. They divided responsibilities, completed research for their questions, prepared speeches, and practiced their presentations. In Jefferson County, one SVPDP student in particular wanted to know the extent to which the culminating activity assignment was to be done collaboratively. She asked if she should help other people if she finished her part of the activity. The teacher replied that such assistance was appropriate, since the activity is a collaborative assignment. Nevertheless, she also reminded the students, "You have delegated your assignments and separated your powers, so you shouldn't just take over someone else's part."[127]

As the students prepared for their first-year SVPDP culminating activities by working cooperatively to research and prepare answers for their assigned questions, their speech writing eventually slowed down. When this happened in Jefferson County, the students were encouraged to practice reading what they planned to say at the hearing to a researcher who was observing the class. Most of what they had written was basic material straight from the CCE books, but when pressed for details, they had no trouble providing them. When the researcher proposed situations to the SVPDP students in which their statements might be challenged in the hearing, they were able to offer supporting arguments or modify their positions to accommodate new information.[128]

Participation in the Culminating Activities

Following their culminating activity preparations, the SVPDP teachers and students participated in the actual activities. The majority of the first-year SVPDP classes have participated in some form of the *We the People* culminating activity; however, few first-year classes have engaged in that for *Project Citizen*. In Jefferson County, a small number of the SVPDP teachers conducted the *We the People* hearings before the end of 1999, but most did so in January or February 2000. Most of the Jefferson County SVPDP teachers conducted a non-competitive version of the hearing, either during or after the school day, and invited parents. One Jefferson County teacher actually completely finished the SVPDP, except for the *Project Citizen* activity, by December

1999.[129] Some of the Wake County SVPDP teachers also completed the *We the People* culminating activity by February 2000.[130]

In February 2000, some of the Denver SVPDP students participated in a *We the People* mock congressional hearing. This culminating activity was held at Trinity United Methodist Church in downtown Denver and included eighth-grade students from two first-year SVPDP schools: Henry Middle School and Skinner Middle School. The students performed well, displaying knowledge of Constitutional issues superior to that of many adults. The students discussed the importance of *Marbury v. Madison* and *Brown v. Board of Education,* the development of judicial review and its validity, and the importance of the courts in protecting the rights of minority students.[131]

A few of the first-year SVPDP district sites scheduled the culminating activities for later in the 1999–2000 school year. In Los Angeles, for example, a couple of the SVPDP teachers scheduled their students' mock congressional hearings for March 2000, and the others scheduled them for June 2000.[132] In Philadelphia, the *We the People* mock congressional hearing was scheduled for May 2000.[133]

Not all of the first-year SVPDP districts completed the culminating activities in the same way. In Queens, for example, the SVPDP teachers appeared to be committed to involving their classes in culminating activities. The SVPDP site coordinator coordinated the selection of judges from the Queens district attorney's office for the participating schools. However, some Queens SVPDP teachers felt more comfortable with an in-class event. At I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School, the teachers had several classes participate in a schoolwide mock congressional hearing.[134]

Throughout the initial year of the SVPDP, the CCE and the SVPDP site coordinators have encouraged student participation in the culminating activities of the program. Nevertheless, in Los Angeles two SVPDP teachers decided that they did not want their students to participate in a *We the People* congressional hearing.[135] In Denver, one SVPDP teacher explained that her class would not participate in any large-scale culminating activity because of a high rate of student turnover. Too many students had entered her class since the program had begun, and she felt they would be unprepared to compete in the site's mock congressional hearing. Alternatively, this teacher has conducted a culminating activity at the classroom level focusing on a single question, and she feels that this has been a major accomplishment.[136]

Based on their observations at several SVPDP teacher training workshops and their interviews with the SVPDP site coordinators, the researchers are aware of many first-year SVPDP teachers who chose to have their classes participate in the SVPDP culminating activities, especially the *We the People* mock congressional hearing. At the same time, several SVPDP teachers have, for appropriate reasons, been unwilling to have their students participate in these activities, because they worry that a poor performance will hurt the students' self-esteem. Further, some teachers also may have decided not to conduct the hearings because of their personal lack of confidence with the *We the People* content or their coaching role.[137]

Responses to the Culminating Activities

In general, the SVPDP participants in and the observers of the *We the People* mock congressional hearings have been enthusiastic and positive about the students' performance in the hearings and about the event itself.

One SVPDP teacher in Jefferson County said of the hearings that "you're blown away by how much [the students] know."[138] The Jefferson County teachers whose classes participated in the hearings reported being very impressed with the judges and the immediate feedback the judges provided to students. Most of the SVPDP students enjoyed the experience, although some were more intimidated than others were. Some of the teachers did their mock hearings in class; others held them in the evenings and invited the parents of the SVPDP students.[139] At the Denver culminating activity, an SVPDP teacher remarked, "I feel that this is something that is going to stick with [the students] for the rest of their lives."[140]

In Denver, the judges of the SVPDP *We the People* congressional hearing were "very impressed," and said that the eighth-grade students who participated in that hearing were comparable to the high school students in grades 11 and 12 whose participation in mock congressional hearings they were used to judging.[141] One judge, referring to one student participant in the hearing, said, "That kid could have told me anything."[142] Referring to one inspiring moment when a young woman defended her rights to the police, another judge beamed, "That alone is reason enough to be doing this."[143]

The level of students' knowledge about Constitutional and citizenship issues also impressed the parents who attended the activity. One parent said, "It's a commitment one must see through, and when one sees the results, it's worth it."[144] This father went on to comment about the relevance of the congressional hearing, noting that the students who participated in the hearing would remember it for the rest of their lives.[145]

The SVPDP students, more than anyone else, probably took the best lessons from the first-year SVPVP culminating activity. Indeed, their words form an appropriate summary for the importance and the influence of the activity. One student, excited about her work, remarked simply, "I learned a lot."[146] Another student said he had "learned how to change government."[147] One student captured well the spirit of the SVPDP in her remarks when she commented, "I learned that you have to listen to everyone's opinion. It's not just about you—it's about all of us."[148] Finally, the culminating activity taught another student that, "as you understand other people better, you know yourself better."[149]

Though completing the culminating activities of the SVPDP can be difficult, these statements by the SVPDP teachers and students show how important the benefits of the activities are. In general, the majority of SVPDP participants have been willing to confront the challenges of the culminating activities to ensure that the students gain these benefits.

Conclusions

The SVPDP is flexible in that it can be implemented in a variety of grades and courses and in classes with diverse student abilities. Seventh and eighth graders are the most common participants, but sixth and fifth graders also have been first-year participants in the program. Further, while the CCE recommends the lessons that an SVPDP teacher include in the SVPDP, a minimum amount of instructional time, and guidelines for the culminating activities, the majority of first-year SVPDP teachers believe that they have had the freedom, in collaboration with their SVPDP site coordinators, to make decisions regarding each of these matters that would enhance the likelihood of a successful program implementation in their classrooms and schools.

The SVPDP teachers generally think highly of and enjoy the curricular materials, and they like using the teaching methods endorsed by the CCE and the textbooks that it supplies. The teachers do feel, however, that integrating the materials and activities of the SVPDP into their regular curriculum is difficult. Interestingly, district curricular requirements have not posed a barrier to the integration of the SVPDP in the way that state requirements have. When the SVPDP teachers receive support from the SVPDP site coordinators and other SVPDP participants, their anxiety about curriculum integration drops dramatically. The technical assistance provided by the site coordinators, and the initiative of coordinators and teachers to prepare integration matrices, has been valuable in helping teachers to cope with this challenge. Some teachers continue to lack confidence in their ability to integrate the SVPDP into the regular curriculum, but in large measure the personal and technical support that the site coordinators have provided them has proved very helpful.

The culminating activities of the SVPDP are an engaging and important element of the SVPDP. In the pilot district sites, the SVPDP teachers, administrators, and site coordinators, as well as the parents and community members, all have been thoroughly impressed by student presentations and knowledge at these activities. The students also are enthusiastic about the opportunities provided by the culminating activities. In a sense, the culminating activities seem an apt metaphor for the whole of the SVPDP: proper training and guidance from the site coordinators and other SVPDP participants can overcome initial teacher and student anxiety about the culminating activity and ultimately lead to exciting and rewarding learning opportunities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations seek to strengthen the effectiveness of the SVPDP curricular materials and culminating activities in order to successfully implement the SVPDP in future years.

1. *In each SVPDP district, prior to each school year of SVPDP implementation in that site, the district social studies coordinator should designate at least one person to prepare, in consultation with the CCE, a district document aligning the SVPDP curricular materials with the district and state curriculum for the grade levels and*

courses within which the SVPDP will be implemented. Each school district has its own curricular policies and procedures that influence classroom instruction, as does each state. One of the greatest challenges that the SVPDP teachers face is planning and carrying out the integration of the SVPDP materials into the regular curriculum in such a way that these materials align with state and district policies. In each SVPDP district, then, the district social studies coordinator should work with the SVPDP site coordinator to designate one or more persons (e.g., experienced SVPDP teachers) to prepare a matrix, guide, or other document that aligns SVPDP lessons with the lessons in the regular curriculum. This "road map" should contain concrete examples of how the SVPDP teachers could integrate the *We the People* and *Foundations of Democracy* lessons into the regular curriculum, for example, as well as provide guidance concerning preparing for and conducting of the SVPDP culminating activities in ways that enhance curricular materials. Providing the SVPDP teachers in each district with this kind of comprehensive integration plan will allow them to concentrate with greater confidence and effectiveness on SVPDP teaching strategies, lesson plans, and student learning.

2. *The CCE should work with the SVPDP site coordinators to distribute SVPDP curricular materials to participating teachers early in the summer prior to the school year of program implementation.* Giving SVPDP teachers access to the CCE materials used in the SVPDP before program implementation provides them the time they need to familiarize themselves with the materials and create their lesson plans for the upcoming year. This will enable teachers to be better prepared for the school year and the initial summer and fall SVPDP teacher training workshops, and such advance planning also will save the teachers time during the busy school year. Moreover, they will be able to raise any concerns about the SVPDP materials and associated CCE expectations while there is still time to make any necessary adjustments. The teachers need to know the full scope, content, and time implications of the SVPDP materials and activities before the beginning of the school year, so that they may prepare adequately to implement the program.

3. *The CCE should provide additional visual materials for the SVPDP teachers and students to use with the SVPDP curricular materials.* Today, students, especially at the upper elementary and middle school levels, often are more skilled with visual media than with books. By largely limiting itself to written texts, the CCE limits access by younger students to its materials and to the underlying civic education concepts. The CCE should develop additional visual aids (e.g., videos, slides, transparencies, computer programs, and interactive CD-ROMs) to accompany written materials. A student-friendly web site for the program would also be well received. The CCE could provide posters (in several languages) highlighting civics, citizenship, and violence prevention, or showing the cartoons illustrating the CCE texts, so that SVPDP students could connect their classroom and school environment to the lessons of the SVPDP. The CCE already has introduced a number of innovative and effective teaching resources to assist the teachers who use its programs; developing supplemental visual materials for the SVPDP that appeal to today's youth would reinforce this well-established CCE practice.

4. *The CCE should allow the SVPDP teachers in a district, working with the SVPDP site coordinator in that district, to select the reading level and language of the CCE curricular materials to be used in their classrooms.* Many teachers participating in the SVPDP have students with a wide range of reading levels in one class, making it difficult to adapt and use some typically suggested activities or discussions. The CCE Level I texts could greatly enhance SVPDP implementation and civic education understanding in classes that include students with special needs, for example. For an SVPDP school that serves newly immigrated students, the CCE should consider providing translated versions of key SVPDP texts, materials, and tests (including the knowledge and attitudinal pretests and posttests) in one or more of the non-English languages used by the SVPDP students. Some CCE materials are available in other languages already, and the CCE should make this known to SVPDP site coordinators before the start of the school year and provide these materials, upon request, to the SVPDP teachers of students speaking these languages. This degree of flexibility in the use of SVPDP materials may complicate the SVPDP's research component. Using the CCE materials in a language that students understand better, however, will enable teachers and students to focus more effectively on the program's content and ideas and, thus, achieve the program's overall goals.

5. *The CCE should solicit suggestions from the SVPDP site coordinators, site evaluators, and teachers who participated in the first-year implementation of the program about how to improve the teacher guides for each of the CCE materials used in the SVPDP and how to improve teacher resources and support.* The SVPDP teachers would benefit from enhanced teacher guides and resources that support the use of the CCE materials and are easier to use than those currently provided. During the first year of SVPDP implementation, the participating teachers and students expressed strong support for materials, but teachers often noted to the researchers that the teacher guides for the SVPDP curricular materials are not entirely satisfactory. The teachers expressed interest in having a more traditional teacher guide, including text from the student book as well, for each set of CCE materials. For example, the CCE might provide each SVPDP teacher with a master binder containing an integrated student and teacher text for each of the CCE programs used in the SVPDP; this binder might have pages that could be easily removed for photocopying or making transparencies. In general, the availability of resources that make the SVPDP materials easier for the teachers to use can lead to a more successful implementation of the SVPDP and greater interest in school districts across the United States in participating in the program.

6. *The CCE should encourage school districts to introduce the SVPDP materials throughout the K-12 curriculum, especially in the elementary and middle grades.* The earlier that children begin to learn and practice citizenship, the better. In addition, there are practical reasons for concentrating not only on students in middle schools but also on those in the elementary grades. Elementary school teachers, because they generally have the same students all day, are especially able to be flexible in their use of the SVPDP materials. For example, they can allow students to use reading time to work on the CCE materials, which is usually not an option in

secondary schools or even in many middle schools. In addition, if a good class discussion occurs, elementary teachers are not obliged to stop it at the end of a 45-minute period. Given the CCE's mission, the elementary years provide an excellent opportunity for schools and communities to lay the foundation for civic responsibility and individual accountability. At the secondary school level, full implementation of the SVPDP materials may be difficult. Nevertheless, the CCE should encourage district social studies coordinators to explore options for using secondary school versions of some of the SVPDP materials and culminating activities to support school violence prevention in high schools. At all grade levels, it would be useful to provide the teachers using the SVPDP materials with matrices, similar to the curriculum guides for the middle school classrooms and teachers participating in the SVPDP, that show how and where the CCE lessons align with, and can be infused into, the district curriculum.

Notes

[1] Center for Civic Education, "The Center Contributes to Research on School Violence," *The Center Correspondent,* vol. 11, no. 3 (Summer/Fall 1999), p. 3.

[2] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Brian Loney, Project Coordinator for the Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff and SVPDP Site Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Arna Caplan, Elementary School Curriculum Writer—Intermediate, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Cindy Stout, Middle School Curriculum Writer, Jefferson County Public Schools; at Jefferson County Public Schools District Office, Golden, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[3] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Wheat Ridge, Colorado, December 8, 1999; and interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Westminster, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[4] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 20, 1999.

[5] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with an SVPDP Teacher, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[6] Interview by Tinh Nguyen with an SVPDP Teacher, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

[7] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with SVPDP Teachers, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 13, 1999.

[8] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga, Angela Hernandez, and Samantha Wallack, I.S. 275K, Thelma J. Hamilton School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 14, 2000.

[9] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with SVPDP Students, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

[10] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 13, 1999.

[11] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with SVPDP Students, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 2, 1999.

[12] SVPDP Teacher interview, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 7, 1999.

[13] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[14] SVPDP Students interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[15] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[16] Ibid.

[17] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[18] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[19] SVPDP Students interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[20] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with SVPDP Students, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[21] SVPDP Teacher interview, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 7, 1999.

[22] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[23] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, February 29, 2000.

[26] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with an SVPDP Teacher, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[27] Interview by Kris Mack and Emily Roth with Carleen Wray, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 22, 2000.

[28] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 22, 2000.

[29] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, February 22, 2000.

[30] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[31] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 13, 1999.

[32] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Melvin Garrison, District Social Studies Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 12, 1999.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Phyllis Gudouski, SVPDP District Contact, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[35] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[36] Ibid.

[37] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[38] Wray interview.

[39] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[40] Ibid.

[41] SVPDP Teacher interview, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 18, 1999.

[42] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Cole Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999; and interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Smiley Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[45] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Baker Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[46] SVPDP Teachers interview, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[47] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[48] Ibid.

[49] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[50] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 29, 2000.

[51] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[52] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[53] Ibid.

[54] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 19, 1999.

[55] Statement by Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[56] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[57] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Lesser interview.

[60] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[61] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 13, 1999.

[62] Presentation by Gwen Marcelli, District Social Studies Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 20, 1999.

[63] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[64] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[65] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 28, 2000.

[66] Interviews by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with SVPDP Teachers at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1999.

[67] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[68] Garrison interview.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] SVPDP Teachers interviews, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[72] Ibid.

[73] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[74] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[75] Interviews by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with SVPDP Teachers at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 13, 1999.

[76] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[77] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[78] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[79] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[80] Telephone interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Weber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Arvada, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[81] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[82] SVPDP Teacher interview, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 7, 1999.

[83] SVPDP Teacher interview, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 18, 1999.

[84] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[85] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[86] Interviews by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with SVPDP Teachers at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[87] SVPDP Teacher interview, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[88] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[89] SVPDP Students interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[90] SVPDP Teachers interviews, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack with Nicole Williams, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 19, 1999.

[93] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[94] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[98] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 235Q, Academy for New Americans, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 12, 1999.

[99] SVPDP Teachers interviews, Wake County Public School System, November 13, 1999.

[100] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[101] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 13, 1999.

[102] SVPDP Students interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[103] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 275K, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), February 14, 2000.

[104] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[105] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with SVPDP Students, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 17, 2000.

[106] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[107] SVPDP Teacher telephone interview, Weber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 7, 1999.

[108] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[109] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga, Angela Hernandez, and Samantha Wallack with SVPDP Students, I.S. 275K, Thelma J. Hamilton School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 14, 2000.

[110] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 235Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 12, 1999.

[111] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Eiber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Lakewood, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[112] SVPDP Teachers interviews, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[113] SVPDP Teacher interview, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 18, 1999.

[114] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, November 13, 1999.

[115] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 19, 2000.

[116] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[117] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[118] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999.

[119] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[120] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[121] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[122] SVPDP Teacher interview, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 23, 2000.

[123] Ibid.

[124] SVPDP Teacher interview, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[130] Wray interview.

[131] Statements at SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[132] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[133] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[134] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 29, 2000.

[135] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, February 22, 2000.

[136] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[137] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Elaine Craig Segal, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, February 22, 2000.

[138] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Jefferson County Public Schools, February 29, 2000.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Statement by an SVPDP Teacher, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, at SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[141] Statement by Mock Congressional Hearing Judge, SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Statement by Parent of Student in SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[145] Ibid.

[146] Statement by Student in SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid.

The SVPDP in Action: School District of Philadelphia

SVPDP Students and Schools Take Actions Against Violence

While reading about the Magna Carta in a *We the People* lesson, one SVPDP class in the School District of Philadelphia discussed "government by contract" during a session observed by the researchers. One of the students suggested that the concept of a "contract" is kind of like the "pledge" that their class had created. These SVPDP students had written and signed a pledge against violence that one student volunteered to read to the researchers. It stated, "We will try to prevent hate crime and harassment from happening by telling a teacher or someone else in a position of authority. We will start a peer mediation program. We will become involved in our school's big brothers/big sisters program to help welcome new students. We will respect and treat people the way that we want to be treated, and we will work to educate others against violence."

The researchers also visited a Philadelphia SVPDP school in which a myriad of on-campus student projects and programs reinforce the messages of civic involvement and anti-violence in the classroom. The school nurse is the champion of this initiative, and she has garnered much respect from both her colleagues and students for her active role in promoting school safety. Spurred by her concern for the welfare of the students, she spearheads the school's successful efforts to secure grant money to fund anti-violence programs and student support counseling by outside agencies. The nurse and the SVPDP teacher at the school meet often to discuss their implementation of the SVPDP and to plan anti-violence projects for the eighth-grade students to conduct as SVPDP culminating activities.

Other efforts at this school complement the SVPDP. Seventh-grade teachers focus on tolerance and civil rights in their classes, and during the 2000–2001 school year, students in certain grades will be trained as peer mediators. During February 2000, sixth-grade students worked with their art teacher to create a "Peace Room," in which volunteer student peer mediation sessions will be held; this activity is connected to an initiative called Project Peace. Another useful program called "I Can Problem Solve" encourages children in kindergarten through grade five to resolve arguments peacefully.

Chapter 7. Classroom and School Factors Shaping SVPDP Implementation

Classroom and school factors, while at times uncontrollable variables for schools, are important in shaping the implementation of the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP). Classrooms are shaped not only by the teacher, the most active agent in the classroom, but also by the students. Classroom and school factors can be divided into three areas: the physical environment, the instructional environment, and the policy environment of the classroom and its school.

The physical environment includes the actual school facility and its upkeep. It refers to how a school looks from the inside and outside, how the school's hallways are decorated, the number of security guards (if any) at the school, the number of students and teachers in the classroom, the physical setup of the classroom, and the length of a class period. Any factor that physically influences the classroom environment or atmosphere is important in how students progress, learn, and achieve. While in many instances these factors are uncontrollable, small physical changes and additions to a classroom can support productive learning and teaching. On the other hand, the physical environment can also impede the learning process.

Another set of important factors are those that influence the instructional environment. While distinct from the SVPDP curricular materials, teaching methods—both interactive and lecture—along with the use of group work and role-playing, affect the teacher-student interplay as well as student-student relations. Interaction among classroom participants helps shape the environment and atmosphere of a classroom and, in turn, the learning that takes place. Other elements that contribute to the shaping of classroom instruction include the types of students who are in the classroom. Classrooms that integrate special education, gifted, or English as a second language (ESL) students have very different environments and face specific educational challenges. In most ESL programs, for example, students are recent immigrants and as such are simultaneously attempting to assimilate, learn English, and comprehend topical material.

School and classroom policies are the third major area of outside factors. Policies, whether unique to a classroom or schoolwide, influence how students behave and learn. Classroom management is an important indicator of student behavior and student progress. The management style established by teachers sets an example to students about democracy, fairness, and justice. In turn, school policies are also important factors in shaping the classroom environment. Whether specific regulations are designed to uphold order and safety through dress codes, zero-tolerance policies, or hallway monitoring, school policies help shape the interaction among students and teachers all the way into the classroom.

In the following sections, classroom and school factors shaping SVPDP implementation are addressed through the experiences of the researchers' visits to schools. At the

conclusion of this chapter, recommendations are offered to help teachers and administrators involved in the SVPDP better understand how they can shape their classroom and school environments for effective and productive use of SVPDP materials.

Classroom and School Factors that Shape the SVPDP Physical Environment

In any communal setting, the physical surroundings contribute to how individuals interact with each other and execute the task or activity at hand. Schools are no different. In addition to such factors as the curriculum, pedagogical methods, and teaching materials, the environment within which students learn and play influences their performance in school. This section first examines elements observed within SVPDP schools but outside classrooms, such as the physical condition of the overall facility, security measures, and non-SVPDP programs that contribute to the general climate of the school. The section then considers elements observed by researchers within SVPDP classrooms, including the size of the classroom, furniture, visual displays, and special resources. Some of these factors depend upon the financial resources available to a school, whereas others correlate more with the enthusiasm of the SVPDP teachers in a specific school.

Environmental Factors that Shape the General Climate of the School

Physical Surroundings in the School

A school's environment in the physical areas outside its classrooms influences the effectiveness with which students learn, in addition to the actual classroom instructional environment. Walking down the hallways and observing lunch periods in SVPDP schools enabled researchers to notice factors that contribute to the climate of a school—the "feel" of a school—and that may offer a glimpse as to whether the students' school environment is positive and nurturing. Some SVPDP school facilities are in better physical condition than others because the schools have greater financial resources, but this reality does not prevent schools in worse physical condition from successfully implementing the SVPDP as well. Generally, SVPDP schools convey the message that they are striving to serve their communities by providing constructive learning environments.

Decorations and displays in school common areas are very important in fostering a sense that the schools are places where students and teachers take pride in the environment, regardless of physical resource limitations. In Brooklyn, for example, SVPDP schools reflect a warehouse-like construction style, with walls that are industrial and sterile. However, the decorative displays of bulletins and showcases located throughout the older buildings and the clean, orderly hallways help diminish any institutional impressions.

Similarly, the Academy for New Americans looks from the outside more like a vacant structure than a thriving school; after all, it is an old factory building.[1] The building has barred windows and what appears to be a padlock on the outer door. Because the school is filled to capacity, it has no cafeteria, gym, or playground. Students are required to walk across the street to the high school to eat lunch and then must immediately return to

school. One might infer that such a spartan, factory-like building would cast a shadow over the attitudes of the students, especially since they do not have a lunchroom or play facilities to call their own. But the opposite is true.

Upon entering the school, the positive energy that the internal climate generates is apparent. In order to compensate for the peeling paint on the dull, yellowish-beige walls, teachers and students have covered a great amount of the wall space with student artwork, papers, and projects that are vibrant with images of America, patriotism, freedom, and multiculturalism. There are also many posters on the walls and a mural painted by the school's 1998–99 students, all of whom were recent immigrants.[2] This illustration is striking because it reveals how students can join in a cooperative effort to improve their school's appearance, fostering future civic participation.

Certain schools use materials to communicate anti-violence messages and acceptance of diversity, which correspond well with the SVPDP. While one cannot claim a causal link between these factors and a reduction in school violence or a change in students' behavior, students respond when authority figures advocate a climate of respect and are concerned about their welfare.

George Sharswood Elementary School in Philadelphia visibly emphasizes a school climate and philosophy that promotes nonviolence and safe neighborhoods. In the front office are brochures for projects such as KidSafe, a program sponsored and run by the Philadelphia Gas Works, which identifies its vehicles with KidSafe stickers. Children can go to the driver of one of these vehicles (which patrol in all neighborhoods 24 hours a day, seven days a week) and seek assistance in an emergency.

Further, the school has posters, brochures, and bookmarks on display and for distribution that the School District of Philadelphia publishes. The materials define harassment and hate, and also provide a hotline number that students can call if they are victims of or witnesses to verbal abuse. The language of these materials includes

> Show respect every day in every way. Safe schools say no to name calling, teasing and bullying.... Take a stand against hate. If you hear others using hate language about someone's race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, income, disability, language, or anything else, you need to take action.... Don't fight back. Walk away and find some help instead.... Schools must be safe everywhere, including classrooms, halls, lunchrooms, school yards, and bus stops.[3]

Colorful decorations in the hallways can transform a less attractive building into a more inviting atmosphere. The messages conveyed in the decorations illustrate that promoting acceptable behavior and a safe climate endeavor to create a setting where students can focus on learning and social development, not on worrying about being threatened or ridiculed. At the very least, they become aware of resources and feel encouraged to seek help and to help fellow students.

Safety Precautions

Whether sparked by a particular tragedy close to home, such as the shootings of Columbine High School students in April 1999, or by the growing national concern about school violence resulting from an increase in well-publicized mass shootings, all seven SVPDP pilot districts are taking school safety very seriously. It is difficult to know whether the presence of security measures in a school makes the students feel nervous or comforted, but precautions are a priority for administrators in these districts. For example, some SVPDP schools target violence as an isolated entity, taking such actions as locker sweeps. In contrast, a handful of schools are taking preventive steps that focus on individuals and building relationships, which they hope foster healthier, more connected environments.

A common school practice is to employ security guards and to require school visitors to check in with a school official. At all of the Brooklyn schools that researchers visited, for example, school safety agents sign in guests, verify identification, and confirm the purpose of the visit. Likewise, in Queens researchers were required to sign in and show photo identification at the schools that they visited, and on one occasion a friendly uniformed police officer greeted them at the front door.[4] On the other hand, a handful of schools require such a procedure but do not enforce it. For example, one Philadelphia SVPDP school has a policy that requires all visitors to sign in at the front desk and carry a pass at all times, yet the researchers roamed the school's halls freely, unimpeded by any staff inquiry. One teacher called the principal to ask if the researchers could visit the cafeteria during lunch, and they were readily given approval to do so.

Similarly, during a researcher's visit to a school in Jefferson County, teachers and staff members were having their pictures taken for identification tags that they must wear whenever they are on campus, a practice that many schools in the district have adopted. Nevertheless, there was little evidence that security measures have much effect at all on daily life at this SVPDP school. Except for the identification tags worn by staff and teachers at the school, the researcher saw no evidence of any school security measures.

While the SVPDP site coordinator asked her to sign in and wear a nametag at each of the four Jefferson County schools she visited, the researcher easily could have roamed the hallways without signing in; no one stopped her or seemed to think it was a problem for a stranger to walk around. None of the SVPDP teachers in Jefferson County mentioned any serious violence or behavioral problems at their schools or among their students. Perhaps individuals at schools in which there has not been a pattern of problem behavior are more relaxed and not as inclined to rigidly enforce school security and safety rules.

Other SVPDP schools have become stricter in their approaches to ensure school safety, however. Starting in 2000, for example, book bags and coats are not permitted inside classrooms at Wanamaker Middle School, an SVPDP school in Philadelphia; bags and backpacks must be kept in lockers. At a Philadelphia SVPDP teacher training workshop, teachers in other SVPDP schools in the district seemed surprised about Wanamaker's new procedure, because there is no such policy at their schools, but measures such as this may proliferate in the future.[5] Sun Valley Middle School in Los Angeles has hired a full-

time police officer, and six campus aides patrol the halls. The police officer conducts a daily weapons check by randomly selecting ten students and searching their backpacks. Campus aides differ from the police officer in that their responsibilities include making sure that students get to class on time, keeping hallway traffic to a minimum during class times, and stopping fights. Ever since the Columbine High School tragedy, administrators at Henry Middle School in Denver make themselves more visible in the hallways and keep all doors locked, except those immediately adjacent to the main office. However, Henry Middle School's assistant principal remarked that if someone were intent on committing a violent act, there was nothing that could prevent him or her from doing so, noting that even Columbine High School had a police officer on site.[6]

One may perceive these safety precautions as encroachments on the students' rights to privacy, but they reflect the realities of threats of school violence across the country. At its core, a school decides its priorities and then, in accord with these priorities, removes dangers that may harm the well-being of students, teachers, or staff. But the Denver assistant principal's comment in the preceding paragraph is very telling. Violence is arbitrary, and in some cases, a plethora of strategies will not prevent crime. Therefore, some schools are beginning to approach safety through a strategy of prevention by forging relationships with students and promoting a school climate of goodwill and responsible citizenship. This serves as a model practice of acting with a concern for others in the community, which the SVPDP champions.

A Jefferson County Public Schools task force that was formed after the Columbine High School shootings created a list of security priorities for schools in that district. Recommendations included the implementation of violence prevention projects and the provision of additional resource officers in schools. Although they are armed and in uniform, the resource officers are not hired guards. Their role is to form relationships with students, not to follow them around the school and search their backpacks. Rather than acting in a punitive way, these individuals create support systems for students. The task force agreed that placing additional security officers in the Jefferson County schools would be counterproductive.[7]

A similar effort is underway in Wake County. Every public school in the county has a resource officer, who is uniformed and carries a gun. The school resource officer program is funded by the local police department and, in some cases, supplemented by the school's PTA.[8] These individuals undergo a one-year training program and also are trained teachers.[9] Reminiscent of the traditional beat officer who patrols an area and develops relationships with that particular community, resource officers endeavor to get to know the students and assist them when they need help. The resource officers, who have been trained by the Center for the Prevention of School Violence in Raleigh, also have responsibilities in the local neighborhood, such as starting a community watch or teaching informal law classes.[10] Within the schools, they become involved in school life by doing class presentations on anger management, substance abuse, shoplifting, and the criminal justice system.[11] The school resource officer program seems to be very effective. By serving as a visible presence in a school, engaging the students in conversation, and imparting knowledge, an officer can break down many misgivings

students have about the police. At the same time, students gain trust for those in authority; they have someone to whom they can turn when they are in trouble.

It is also worth mentioning one SVPDP pilot district in which initiatives to increase school safety have elevated fear among students. There has been substantial gang activity in areas surrounding SVPDP schools in Los Angeles. In efforts to avoid these gangs, students from a nearby high school began walking through the campus of one SVPDP middle school on their way to and from school. School administrators disapproved of the older students walking through the campus and decided to lock the back gates, but the principal subsequently agreed to open them when the high school students explained that they felt safer walking through the school grounds than on the streets.[12] In one specific incident, all the students and teachers had to stay inside their classrooms, with no one leaving or entering the school, until the police and administrators could control the situation. Students dread these kinds of incidents. The bars on the windows make them feel unsafe, and the school does not feel like it is theirs anymore.[13]

In summary, SVPDP schools demonstrate the use of a wide range of safety precautions to promote a constructive, secure learning environment. Though the level of urgency and oversight of policies may be linked with the number of previous incidents in the school or in the community, school violence remains on the minds of school officials, teachers, and students across the country. Unfortunately, as the example from Los Angeles highlights, even substantial safety measures and school policing will not always mean that students will feel completely safe. An environment of safety must go much deeper than backpack searches and armed guards; there must be a pervasive sense that the school is a community built on trust. Schools that focus on preventive safety programs ultimately seem better positioned to build that trust and to enjoy that sense of community.

Special Programs and Services Offered

Within SVPDP schools and classrooms, there are countless examples of special programs and services that contribute to a more constructive environment, not only for the students and teachers but also for parents and visitors. In fact, sometimes these alternative resources become the means that help draw parents into the school and help them feel more connected to their children's lives. Equally important, many schools offer services through which students can seek help and encouragement. Consequently, programs and services that cultivate a more caring, participatory school and classroom environment might induce students, teachers, and staff to be more receptive and responsive to creative curricula-based programs like the SVPDP.

A handful of SVPDP schools offer comprehensive services to their student populations that help them cope with internal and external challenges. Sun Valley Middle School, for example, offers tutorial programs and also the IMPACT program, which targets at-risk LAUSD students through counseling and opportunities for them to become involved in their community. Field trips are organized to introduce students to the arts, nature, and sporting events in the neighborhood. By exposing students to extracurricular activities, they are less prone to become involved with gang activities. To further encourage students to become better citizens, the director of the IMPACT program wrote a

curriculum entitled "Growing Up Caring" that teachers use in every homeroom class. The curriculum includes lessons on respect, decision-making, conflict resolution, and responsible citizenry.[14] The IMPACT program serves as an excellent supplement to the SVPDP. By encouraging nonviolent problem solving and respect for others, teachers provide students with multiple lessons that reinforce constructive behavior.

Another excellent example of resources for SVPDP students is found at George Sharswood Elementary School in Philadelphia. Seventh-grade SVPDP teachers focus on tolerance and civil rights in their classes, and in 2000 students in specific grade levels will be trained as peer mediators. This type of program is critical in a place where, according to the school nurse, "gay bashing starts in kindergarten" and where there has been evidence of skinhead groups.[15] In addition, a Peace Room that is connected to a venture called Project Peace will soon house voluntary peer mediation sessions. Students, led by an artist-in-residence, are currently painting the room and the furniture, and they seem to be very excited about the project.[16] Another useful program called "I Can Problem Solve" targets children in kindergarten through grade five and encourages them to resolve arguments peacefully.

There are a number of other school-based programs at Sharswood Elementary School, especially for children with emotional or behavioral problems. Two mental health agencies provide in-school counseling five days a week, and a new initiative from a community group called Shalom will provide drug and alcohol counseling twice a week. The school nurse is very enthusiastic about the fact that Shalom intends to make a long-term commitment to the school. To witness these initiatives at an elementary school is quite encouraging. Because many experts have pointed to the importance of the age at which children absorb and mimic hateful words and actions, the projects are significant and timely.

Because strengthening relationships with community members can create a more positive school and classroom environment, some SVPDP schools provide programs for parents. In Los Angeles, researchers were greeted warmly when they entered the Parent Center at Sun Valley Middle School unannounced. The director met them at the door with a big smile, a firm handshake, and a *bienvenida* (welcome). During a weekly parental workshop that was in progress, one mother noted, "It is important for parents to feel welcome in schools. Only then can we truly understand the system. Many times, when parents visit the school, the office staff does not take the time to explain things to us. That is why we feel more comfortable coming to the Parent Center than we do visiting the rest of the campus."[17] Another mother elaborated, "When we can feel comfortable in all areas of the school, we can better inform ourselves of other programs like drug rehabilitation and employment opportunities to improve our situations."[18]

At a handful of SVPDP schools, some individuals indicated to researchers that administrators could do more to improve the overall atmosphere of the school. For example, parents in Denver thought that schools should make a greater effort to make parents feel more comfortable in coming to school, especially parents who do not speak English as a first language. These parents believe that language and cultural barriers

discourage parents from participating more actively in school activities. More pointedly, the head of the community association located near Horace Mann Middle School stated that people in the neighborhood are afraid of authority figures, including police officers and administrators at the school.[19]

Environmental Factors within the SVPDP Classrooms

Classroom Size and Type

Both the dimensions of a classroom and the student-teacher ratio can influence the implementation of an interactive program such as the SVPDP. While large numbers of students and small classrooms do not necessarily preclude the program's success in the seven pilot sites, they create certain hindrances. Furthermore, elements such as short class periods, rising school populations, and temporary and rotating classrooms can sometimes prevent the participants from fully maximizing the benefits of the lessons.

The average SVPDP classroom size in the participating schools is 27.8 students, ranging from 24 in Brooklyn to 31.4 in Los Angeles.[20] It would be speculative to conclude a strong correlation between a lower number of students and successful SVPDP implementation by assuming that such a situation creates an environment that is ripe for individualized teacher attention. However, the student-teacher ratio often can be an important element.

Thirty students comprise one SVPDP eighth-grade class at Mulholland Middle School in Los Angeles. During a site visit, researchers observed a lesson in which there was a breakdown in student behavior as side chatter overpowered the teacher-led discussion. To the researchers, the disruption appeared to have occurred because of the relatively high student-teacher ratio.[21] Not only can large numbers of students hinder a smooth, focused lesson, they can prevent teachers from giving enough attention to cooperative student working groups, a fundamental component of the SVPDP.[22]

In addition, a few of the seven SVPDP pilot districts face challenges of rising populations that exacerbate the potential problems associated with high student-teacher ratios. Last year, for example, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) approved policies to institute stringent grade advancement requirements, thus making it harder for less capable students to advance to the next grade level. Some teachers and administrators worry that schools are not equipped to educate these students repeating grade levels. There already is inadequate classroom space for students, and with the prospect of over one-half of the district's students failing their grades at the end of the 1999–2000 school year, LAUSD could face serious challenges of accommodation.[23]

While Los Angeles faces swelling classrooms due to a shift in district policies, the Wake County Public School System in North Carolina must rise to the challenge of a population boom that has persisted in that region for several years. There are 3,500 new students coming into the district every year, and one SVPDP school is at 187 percent capacity.[24] Another participating school is also well over capacity and has added 12 portable trailers, each housing two classrooms. One classroom housed in the portables

was noticeably cold on the morning the researchers visited, and they could easily hear a noisy class next door through the wall. The researchers felt cramped in the room, even though there were only 19 students in the classroom.[25] Certainly challenges such as these in California and North Carolina are not unique to SVPDP classrooms, but they can contribute to less specialized attention during group work activities and to distractions that inhibit the completion of the SVPDP lessons.

Another factor that periodically inhibits optimal implementation of the SVPDP is class schedules. Because many of the CCE lessons have an interactive component, time is of the essence. Group work can be invigorating yet also time-consuming because of the myriad opinions and ideas expressed in a classroom. Therefore, additional minutes allotted for any given lesson should ease the completion of the activity and improve student learning.

For instance, in Brooklyn, most class periods are 40 minutes. Researchers noted that this time length hinders full implementation of the SVPDP lessons, especially since a quarter of the class period is sometimes consumed by the teacher handling routine administrative matters, such as taking attendance or collecting homework.[26] To complicate matters, in one class observed by researchers students were frustrated by numerous announcements that came through the intercom and felt that the interruptions disrupted their cooperative work. In contrast, one class in Brooklyn's I.S. 284K, Lou Wallace School, met for an extended period. During the SVPDP lesson observed by researchers, this extra time allowed the class to complete an electoral activity in which the students role-played a candidates' debate for mayor—exactly the type of interactive process that offers the students experience in citizen participation. Unfortunately, the teacher specially arranged for this extra time; this is not the typical schedule.

Flexibility in scheduling provides Jefferson County Public Schools with an advantage similar to that of a school that operates on block scheduling (i.e., students meet for two or more consecutive periods in the same room). Because participating SVPDP schools in this Colorado county are elementary schools and students remain in the same classroom all day, teachers have the flexibility to shorten or lengthen certain lessons as needed. In fact, one program participant who teaches a combination class of fifth and sixth graders mentioned that, when necessary, she can cut another subject short to finish an SVPDP project or to integrate CCE material into a reading lesson.[27]

Another elementary school in Jefferson County goes one step further—it "doubles" the entire school year. As a means to assist its students, Eiber Elementary School has a longstanding tradition of "looping" fifth and sixth graders. Looping is a pedagogical practice in which students remain with the same teacher for more than one school year in order to provide continuity and stability for the students. Monitoring the students over two years during such a formative stage in their development enables teachers to reinforce components of civics, including cooperation, respect for others, and recognition of what it means to participate as a member of a small community. For example, students can delve into a local neighborhood issue for *Project Citizen* and spend a substantive period on the venture, from formulating an idea to tracking its application. Brian Loney,

SVPDP site coordinator in Jefferson County Public Schools, echoed this benefit. He suggested that teachers incorporate *Project Citizen* throughout the entire sixth grade and not teach it as a separate entity, because "it would give kids a chance to look at their school and community" in a more thoughtful, thorough manner.[28]

One LAUSD school faces an additional challenge with regard to scheduling that renders SVPDP implementation, as well as that of any other program, rather frustrating. Sun Valley Middle School operates on a multi-track, year-round school schedule. Because the high number of students currently makes classroom space very limited, the district administrators decided to stagger schedules in order to accommodate the growing student population. Sun Valley Middle School teachers dislike this arrangement imposed by the district because it creates discontinuities in student learning and has slowed down implementation of the SVPDP.[29] Similarly, West Lake Middle School in the Wake County Public School System is a year-round school, although researchers saw no evidence that this schedule has negatively affected the program's implementation.

Whether or not a teacher has a permanent classroom can also impede a constructive learning and teaching environment. Fortunately, most SVPDP teachers have their own classrooms. But in one Brooklyn school, researchers noted that one teacher used another SVPDP teacher's room to teach his class, and, consequently, it did have a certain transient feel to it.[30]

Likewise, one significant disadvantage with which I.S. 235Q, Academy for New Americans, in Queens must cope is that several teachers float between classrooms, as well as prepare their lessons and eat at a few tables in an open area at the end of a hallway, an area that also serves as the school nurse's station. One teacher is assigned a room that serves as the library and auditorium. It is the largest classroom in the school, but it is really only the size of a relatively average to smaller than average-sized classroom in other district schools. The classrooms are quite small, a few are awkwardly shaped, and they feel crowded even though some of the classroom student-teacher ratios appear to be low. Another teacher does not have his own classroom, despite the fact that he has approximately 20 years of teaching experience. Because he is a "traveling" teacher, it took him several weeks to finalize plans for his first-year implementation of the SVPDP. This difficulty of not having an individual classroom has slowed his progress in getting through the SVPDP material.[31]

While several variables concerning classroom size and type highlight particular benefits of or challenges to the SVPDP, the presence or absence of a characteristic does not guarantee success or failure. The Academy for New Americans, for example, faces numerous challenges due to limited resources, but from subsequent discussions in this chapter it is evident that this physical reality does not preclude SVPDP teachers in the school from delivering nor the students from participating in lively, relevant civics discussions. Similarly, researchers observed an excellent and engaging lesson at a School District of Philadelphia school, despite the fact that the classroom was relatively small and cramped with 26 desks, that it took place during the last period before a holiday weekend (and so actual teaching time lasted only 30 minutes), and that the students had

to speak very loudly over the noise that filtered through the thin walls of an adjacent classroom.[32] Still, a reasonably-sized class and appropriate classroom space should enhance implementation of the SVPDP.

Furniture in the Classroom

The SVPDP stresses cooperative learning as a means of instilling in students the importance of personal interactions and communal activities. How teachers choose to use desks, chairs, and tables can positively influence the way in which students learn to be good citizens. Several of the classrooms that researchers observed demonstrate an intersection of pedagogy and furniture arrangement that encourages group exchanges.

Several classrooms at various SVPDP sites arrange desks in clusters to facilitate group work. One Denver teacher in particular employs a unique layout. This teacher at Horace Mann Middle School places lab-like tables in a horseshoe shape to provide a large open space that maximizes opportunities for inclusive activities, such as a debate, speeches, or presentations. Students primarily sit on the outside of the horseshoe, enabling them to see the teacher and their classmates more easily.[33] Similarly, another Denver classroom contains three units of tables on one side of the room, while two rows of desks are traditionally arranged in the back. The teacher recognizes the benefits of the non-traditional design, explaining that she would like to furnish the entire classroom with tables to enable more group work. Unfortunately, she has had little success in getting her request funded by school administrators.[34]

Despite the use of clustered furniture arrangements in other districts, several schools that face space and time constraints cannot take advantage of this strategy. As discussed earlier, the disadvantages of small classrooms can complicate endeavors. For example, a limited space that is packed with dozens of students is not conducive to a spontaneous rearrangement of desks for a mock town meeting. Traditional furniture design can make collaborative tasks quite challenging, though not impossible. As observed in a Philadelphia classroom, a lively discussion can occur while students sit in cramped rows facing forward. Nevertheless, for the most part, clustered furniture facilitates the implementation of SVPDP activities and learning.

Obviously, some of these limitations are beyond the control of the teachers. In Queens, one SVPDP teacher kept the students seated in rows from the beginning of class and never asked the students to form cooperative learning groups, because he would need the students to return the desks to rows at the end of the class period, thus shortening the instructional time. Even in situations such as this, however, it may be possible to involve students in game-like desk rearrangement drills that, once learned, can be done quickly and thus be used to enhance student learning through cooperative groups.

Researchers observed a similar situation in a Los Angeles classroom with 14 students in which the students were evenly distributed throughout the room in what appeared to be a deliberate seating arrangement. In each row, there was at least one empty desk between every two students. Such a small class as this seems like an optimal size to promote group seating arrangements. It certainly would be beneficial to encourage teachers who

have the flexibility to use small groups of desks whenever possible. This arrangement reinforces an interactive, communal classroom atmosphere, even if a particular lesson does not require it.

Visual Displays in the Classroom

Another factor that shapes the physical environment within the SVPDP classrooms is the use of visual displays, which either function as decorations or are incorporated into the actual instruction as teaching tools or into the teacher's discipline rules. In either case, they reflect the core principles of the SVPDP. One cannot hypothesize that a plethora of materials directly links to a reduction of school violence or a change in students' attitudes. However, because some students absorb and process information through sight and because colorful, bright spaces help to energize the students and build their confidence when they see their work hanging on the wall, teachers' efforts to use decorations as much as possible can help the SVPDP implementation.

Overall, SVPDP teachers observed by researchers effectively use classroom wall decorations to reinforce civics, and a handful of examples convey anti-violence messages. While some classrooms seem to have visually reinforced SVPDP concepts more than others, all of the observed schools demonstrate excellent examples. Various teachers fill their walls with materials pertaining to civics and American History, with some materials focusing specifically on prejudice or violence. At Horace Mann Middle School in Denver, several signs on the walls display words and phrases like "civic virtue," "customs," "principles of morality," "authority," "power," "natural rights," "social compact or social contract," "state of nature," "common welfare," and "absolute power"—all terms from the SVPDP.[35] One LAUSD SVPDP classroom contains a poster that reads, "If you *really* believe in America, prejudice is foul play," and another displays the command, "*Si ves una arma en la escuela, salva una vida—dicelo a alguien*," or, "If you see a weapon at school, save a life—tell someone."[36] The walls of an SVPDP classroom in Queens are covered with posters expressing support for students as well as the importance of diversity. Some examples include "Appreciate cultural diversity" and "Encourage respect and responsibility to self and others."[37]

Visual reinforcement of fundamental SVPDP concepts such as civic participation, diversity, and violence prevention are key, especially when students can witness the teachers setting an example by instilling a concern for the world around them. Still, these materials can be even more effective when directly incorporated into teaching methods, as well as when the message of the decorations connects to the students' lives in the present.

Researchers observed one Queens teacher helping her students create a chart to visualize the relationship between power and authority. It was an outstanding illustration of student interest, engagement, and understanding, and it is a perfect example of how students are learning the concepts and using them in their daily class experience through the use of visual displays. The teacher also kept the flipchart page on which she and the students had developed a "thought map" of sources and types of power and authority discussed in that lesson of *We the People*.[38] On posters in the front of one Brooklyn

classroom are displayed clearly defined roles, such as "facilitator," "harmonizer," "reporter," "time manager," and "material manager"; students assume these roles during group activities.[39] Another school exhibits strategies for collaborative work on the wall.[40]

In addition to helping teach SVPDP lessons, displays can be an effective means of connecting the coursework to students' personal interests and experiences. Occasionally, researchers encountered students who did not find the materials interesting, and one group of students provided an illuminating perspective. In response to a question from a researcher about what the students think is the purpose of the SVPDP, one boy replied that it is "to make us learn about the old days....Personally, I think that it is boring."[41] Generally, however, the SVPDP students noted that they like the lessons when they are applied and more relevant to their lives. When this happens, students are more likely to retain the elements from the SVPDP throughout their lifetimes.

Researchers observed a handful of examples that link the past to the present for the students. One bulletin board contains a quote from a Bob Marley song: "In this great future, you can't forget your past," along with student essays describing their ancestry or a family story.[42] Another classroom display promotes the importance of learning history as a means for understanding the present.[43] Perhaps one of the most powerful illustrations of responsible civic participation was observed in the efforts of an SVPDP teacher in Queens. Upon entering his classroom, the researchers noticed that a huge American flag with tattered edges at the bottom dominates the back wall. The teacher explained that the flag had accidentally been left flying overnight during one of the most violent storms during recent years in New York City. The strength of the wind had done a very dramatic job of fraying its edges. In order to keep the flag from being thrown out, he had to fight both students and janitors. The teacher felt that the flag exemplified survival, and he chose to hang it in his classroom as a reminder of its endurance.[44] But it does much more than that—it serves as a symbolic reminder to students not only of American democracy but also of the power that one individual holds to make a difference in a community.

In addition to reinforcing elements of history, cooperation, and anti-violence, some classroom visual displays pertain to rules and discipline policies of individual teachers. The following rules in one Brooklyn classroom are listed along one of the walls, for example: "Eating, drinking and gum chewing are not allowed; Disruptive behaviors are not allowed; Come to class prepared; Keep the room clean; Respect yourself; Profanity is not allowed."[45] The posted rules in a second classroom assert: "We will speak respectful language; We will come to school on time; We will complete all classes and homework on time; We will come to school prepared; We will respect everyone."[46] These words and phrases reflect the kind of behavior to which the students should ultimately strive in order to live and work respectfully, peacefully, and kindly with others. Furthermore, it is good practice for teachers to state clearly the rules in the classroom so that all students know what they are. Discipline is more fair and less arbitrary if the rules are followed, both by the students and by the teachers. This practice directly corresponds to a lesson from *We the People* in which students debate the differences between power and authority, and the abuses of these privileges.

Thus, decorations serve two functions in SVPDP classrooms: they relate to the lessons, and they relate to discipline and maintaining order, the latter of which is indirectly connected to concepts of civics and constructive conflict resolution. Positive messages of visual displays reinforce the elements of the SVPDP, and these messages become more relevant when the students see the connections to their lives. This type of classroom environment inspires them to act responsibly and to contribute to their communities.

Special Resources in the Classroom

In addition to furniture and visual displays, special resources can strengthen the instructional environment in the classroom. These resources include traditional machines, such as overheads, and computers, which provide creative ways for teachers to reinforce SVPDP lessons. Additional human resources also help facilitate activities.

While not all SVPDP classrooms have supplemental pedagogical equipment, most of them have at least one item. Overhead machines and film projectors can display colorful slides and movies, respectively, to enhance the lessons.[47] One Philadelphia SVPDP classroom boasts two televisions, which enable students to watch special news reports or political debates.[48] Of course, computers are resources that are also becoming ubiquitous in schools across the country. Of the SVPDP classrooms observed by researchers, those in five of the seven districts had at least one computer, and one school had as many as six in one room. During lunch, students from Queens were observed using two of four new computers in one classroom. To the researchers, it seemed that the students were connected to the Internet, or at least were using colorful, multimedia programs.[49] Participating schools may have separate computer labs, but immediate classroom access to the Internet provides an excellent tool for students as they conduct historical research on a framer of the Constitution or on a local grassroots advocacy organization for *Project Citizen*.

Additional human resources in the classroom can tremendously aid teachers in managing SVPDP students and teaching lessons. One teacher in Denver supervised a student teacher for a semester, and this assistance helped her a great deal when facilitating group work and also freed up class time for additional activities.[50] Individuals from the community can provide a particularly useful resource in connecting students to individuals outside the school and in demonstrating the importance of volunteering. Unfortunately, the schools cannot always control how effective a specific volunteer will be. For example, one SVPDP pilot district has a partnership with the City Year Corps program, through which young volunteers—mostly high school age—visit the schools, assist in classrooms, and organize service learning projects. Researchers witnessed one such volunteer in an SVPDP classroom, but he only sat and observed the lesson. When the researchers later asked the students about him, they replied that he "doesn't do much."[51] Although such a program of volunteers could add to the energy and substance of SVPDP lessons, this particular case appeared to be a missed opportunity. Generally, however, it appears that special resources in the classrooms, whether they are supplemental teaching tools or additional individuals, are contributing to more well-rounded lessons.

In considering the physical learning environment within a classroom, several variables contribute to how well a teacher conveys the message of the SVPDP and how easily the students carry out the assignments and learn the lessons. Low student-teacher ratios and clustered furniture can increase the frequency and effectiveness of cooperative learning. Teachers who have flexibility in scheduling and permanent classrooms seem to be able to overcome logistical challenges more easily. Visual wall displays reinforce concepts of civic participation, diversity, and respect for others, as well as appropriate behavior in the classroom. These displays become even more powerful if teachers incorporate them into SVPDP lessons and choose materials that are relevant to the students' lives. Finally, special resources such as computers or volunteers strengthen the lessons and supplement the students' perspectives on their communities. Although it is important to remember that successful lessons often take place in SVPDP schools in the face of physical challenges and a lack of resources, it is equally important to note that the presence of special resources increases the likelihood of successful SVPDP cooperative learning in the classrooms.

In summary, classroom and school factors that shape the physical environment can enhance the implementation of the SVPDP by fostering school communities in which students develop academically and socially in a healthy, safe, and supportive atmosphere.

Classroom Factors That Shape the SVPDP Instructional Environment

Classroom factors shape not only the physical environment within which the SVPDP is implemented but also the SVPDP instructional environment, which contributes to the ways in which students interact with one another, their teachers, and their surroundings. The physical environment—ranging from the physical condition of the school facility to the chosen pieces of art and informational posters on the walls and blackboards—is key to successful program implementation and student success. Yet, having even greater direct influence are the relationships between teachers and their students and how teachers facilitate and nurture these relationships.

This section examines classroom factors involving SVPDP teachers, students, and school policies to understand better the relationships between classroom factors and student learning. Teaching methods, for example, affect the interactions and responses in the classroom, and while the SVPDP materials advocate interactive teaching and learning, researchers also observed examples of successful traditional integration of different teaching methods. Likewise, group work and role-playing, vital concepts of the SVPDP materials, foster student interaction and learning. In addition, special populations, including gifted, special education, and non-English speaking students, demand creative solutions for student interaction. Finally, related to the ultimate goal of the SVPDP, classroom management policy is a factor that shapes SVPDP implementation through student responses, relationships to one another, and relationships to their teachers.

Teacher Initiatives

When the student enters the classroom, the teacher is the first factor to shape the instructional environment and mood within those four walls. The teacher's instructional

methods and materials influence how students respond, how they learn, and how they achieve. While the SVPDP advocates certain approaches to teaching, many methods have been used with great success in the first-year implementation of the SVPDP. Beyond the methods, however, what is most important is how the teacher engages his or her students. This section of the report examines interactive teaching, the lecture approach, group work, and role plays as factors that shape the atmosphere and the success of an SVPDP classroom. There are best practices in all methods, as illustrated by the seven SVPDP district sites.

Interactive Teaching and the Lecture Approach

The cornerstone of SVPDP (and CCE) materials is the interactive approach to teaching. During SVPDP classroom visits across the country, researchers encountered an array of methods and uses of the materials. The interactions and responses from students in the classrooms varied according to teacher, method, and physical environment. Ultimately, researchers did not observe a common pattern regarding instructional techniques or geographic location. In many ways and in many classrooms, SVPDP teachers are able to create an effective and supportive learning atmosphere using an instructional "best practice" that draws students into lessons and discussions with one another.

Brooklyn offers an example of the interactive approach as a factor in motivating SVPDP student responses and interest. When the researchers visited this district, they observed several classes led by the SVPDP site coordinator, Nicole Williams. Williams demonstrated effectively both to the researchers and to the teachers how SVPDP materials could be integrated and used in the classroom. One factor that contributed to her ability to integrate SVPDP materials in her lessons was that the classes she led met for a longer time than the traditional 40-minute period. As a result, students were better prepared and better able to participate in an extended lesson that culminated in an electoral activity.[52]

In all Brooklyn classes observed by the researchers and led by Williams, the students were extremely enthusiastic and receptive to the SVPDP presentation. The observed activity called for students to elect the mayor of a town from among several students running for the office. In their campaign speeches, the students touched on a variety of issues, ranging from economic growth in the community and reducing taxes to increasing educational access and preserving the quality of life and the environment in an expanding community. Following the candidates' statements, one student noted that one of the candidates appeared to be very popular and that would make him a better candidate.

A classmate disagreed, stating that "popular isn't a leadership quality." The student who had suggested the candidate's popularity as a positive quality shot back, "Yes it is, if it means that more people know the candidate and feel comfortable talking to him." A lengthy class discussion ensued in which all students gave their opinions regarding popularity. They concluded that while being popular might help to get the candidate elected, it was not a characteristic that they should look for in a possible mayor. Though some students were hesitant initially to participate in the electoral activity, by the end of the activity researchers noted all students' enthusiasm to partake in the voting process.

Both the SVPDP instructional material and the interactive approach stimulated thoughtful student comments and contributions about what characteristics to look for in a candidate.[53]

Williams' efforts in Brooklyn mirror the concepts of the SVPDP. Her breadth of experience as a CCE teacher and trainer contribute to her ability to walk into a classroom, observe the students and their surroundings, and immediately focus on their interests and needs. More important, the classroom interactions are a result of Williams' enthusiasm and of her ability to use the characteristics of the Brooklyn students to draw them into a discussion about their roles as citizens in their community. By discussing topics that have an impact on their classroom, their families, and their community, students have an avid interest in the discussion while developing critical thinking skills.

During an SVPDP teacher training workshop in Brooklyn, a teacher shared with the researchers and other teachers her experience with the program materials and her facilitation of discussion among students with regard to critical thinking and decision making. She recounted that a female student in her SVPDP class, who had been feeling intimidated by an aggressive male classmate, stood up in class and stated that the boy was intimidating her. The teacher was able to build on this moment, because the lesson was on power and authority. She facilitated a conversation among the students about the male student's actions. The class discussed how that student had been exercising power without authority because he was bigger and more aggressive than the girl; the class agreed that this was not justified. The Brooklyn teacher's comfort in engaging the class in a discussion of students' environmental realities and feelings is one productive approach to discussing the content of SVPDP materials and the goal of nonviolence.[54]

One researcher observed another example of an interactive instructional environment in Jefferson County. During an SVPDP classroom observation, she sat in on a lesson that addressed the role of the city council in making laws for a municipality. The teacher began by relating the idea of rulemaking to an event in the school. On the day the researcher visited, the school principal cancelled recess due to a snowstorm. The students were upset about being denied recess, and, like the Brooklyn teacher, the Jefferson County teacher perceived the students' frustration as a teachable moment. She asked them to think about why the principal had cancelled recess—and if he had not done so, what the consequences might have been. Students responded that someone could slip on the ice and get hurt, or that people might get sick because of the cold weather. The teacher prompted the students to consider other explanations. As it turned out, several students in the past had frequently thrown snowballs at other students, thus breaking school safety rules. The principal had warned students on many occasions, but the behavior had persisted.[55] In the end, these Jefferson County students conceded that the principal had an obligation to try to protect all of the students, even though they felt that it was unfair to deprive everyone of recess because of the actions of a few. The teacher reminded the class that it is not possible to control the actions of other people; individuals can only control themselves. She pointed out that being a good citizen of the school means that students have to weigh the positive and negative consequences of their

actions, have to consider that their actions affect those around them, and have to choose appropriate behavior accordingly.

The weighty discussion led by the Jefferson County teacher exemplifies how local factors and an awareness of students' immediate environment influence their decision making and critical thinking skills and can be used effectively in the implementation of the SVPDP. Had the students debated a topic that was not directly related to their own experiences, their interest may have lacked the intensity revealed during the observation.

Subsequently, when the Jefferson County SVPDP teacher proceeded to discuss the city council lesson, she transferred the snow situation to a higher level of government, pointing out that governments also must consider the consequences of their actions. The teacher introduced an exercise to demonstrate to students the importance for legislative members to consider carefully all possible ramifications of a law before they pass it. She proposed the example of a hypothetical city that had passed a "no vehicles in the park" law as a way of preserving the park as a quiet, natural space. The students thought this was a good idea. The teacher then asked them to serve as the jury on a number of cases brought to court as violations of the "no vehicles" law. She reminded them that both judges and juries have to pass sentences based on what the law states.

The illustrative cases she offered to the students included a woman who drove her car through the park because she was in a hurry; a garbage truck that went into the park to pick up garbage too heavy to carry out by hand; an ambulance driving through the park carrying a heart attack victim; bicycle and tricycle riders in the park; skateboarders; and a flatbed truck bringing into the park an old army tank that the city wanted to put in the park as a war memorial. In some of the cases, it seemed clear to the students that the law had been violated, but in other cases they wanted to argue that the law was unfair. The teacher pointed out that, according to the law, any vehicle was prohibited, leading one of the students to say, "This is a stupid law."[56] The students decided that the law was not clear in defining a vehicle and that it did not allow for exceptions in special cases. One student pointed out that, as the law was written, "A person in a wheelchair can't go into the park, and that's not fair."[57] The students decided that, in general, city councils should be careful about how they frame laws.

When the teacher dismissed the class, she reminded them that the following day they would discuss skateboard laws and that they should keep what they had learned that day in mind when they returned to class. As the students packed up their belongings, they continued to discuss heatedly the "no vehicles" law among themselves. Several students came up to the teacher to ask her follow-up questions and to express their opinions. Two boys who could not get her attention because of the crowd decided that the researcher would be a good person to talk to about the situation, so they asked her what she thought the city council should do. The researcher and the students discussed, at some length, whether bicycles were vehicles. They eventually agreed that the law should cover only motorized vehicles, making an exception for motorized wheelchairs. By using an interactive approach and enveloping local interests of students into the SVPDP instructional framework, the Jefferson County teacher illustrated the important

connection between classroom factors and student interest and response in the classroom. The teacher's efforts also reflected her own comfort in using the interactive approach to teaching the material. However, this approach, while a "best practice," is not the sole way that SVPDP teachers gain and maintain student interest and response in the classroom.

A traditional teaching method of lecture, with questions and answers, also can influence the classroom learning environment and shape the implementation of the SVPDP. While often criticized, this method is not void of success. One SVPDP teacher in Queens whom researchers observed, for example, appeared to have the most traditional teaching style of all the SVPDP teachers observed in the seven district sites, yet he also effectively implemented the program. Following is a description of his lecture approach and its positive contributions to the classroom environment and to student learning and conduct, as observed by the researchers.[58]

The teacher seated the students in rows and never asked the students to form cooperative learning groups. His lesson was presented predominantly through a lecture, liberally sprinkled with questions addressed to students. He began his class with a "Do Now," a short assignment for students to do while he took roll and prepared for the class. The "Do Now" assignment asked the students to answer a few questions from the textbook. The students were quite responsive to his instruction to begin the exercise.

It was apparent to the researchers from the students' class discussion that at least some students had understood the previous SVPDP lessons. The teacher asked his students many questions referring to other lessons, and they always answered correctly. The teacher appeared to call on students who raised their hands and did not call on any students who chose not to volunteer. Nevertheless, students were able to identify without help, for example, that King George III was the British monarch during the American Revolution and that taxation was a major issue for the colonists.

Two particular strengths of this SVPDP teacher's instructional style were his classroom management and his use of the Socratic method. He was very knowledgeable about who was paying attention to the lesson, and several times caught a student who was not paying attention and was attempting to disrupt other students. In responding to student questions, he was very patient and was able to draw the answers from students. He effectively conveyed the content of the SVPDP lessons to his students, while getting them to understand and to analyze critically the issues related to the materials.

Thus, the lecture style, while not advocated for use in the implementation of the SVPDP, can be used effectively in the classroom. While the instructional dynamic among students and teachers is different and perhaps more constrained in a lecture environment, students can still effectively learn and understand the instructional content and applications. As the SVPDP example from Queens illustrates, there are "best practices" associated with the lecture approach to classroom instruction just as with the collaborative approach. Indeed, while the lecture approach does limit students to raising their hands and giving direct answers, it also can foster student skills that are centered on peer/adult respect and on providing clear and concise answers to problems.

Group Work and Role-Play

Another classroom factor that shapes SVPDP implementation by contributing to student responsiveness is group work and role-play activities. As one SVPDP student commented to researchers, "Working in groups is going to give us the skills we're going to use later in life. We won't be afraid of our next-door neighbor."[59] Another student commented on role-play as a positive classroom characteristic: "You get to hear the ideas of other people besides your own."[60] Altering the roles that students assume impacts the learning environment. Whether students play the roles of lead characters or group members, the respect they gain through this process for different ideas and group participation shapes and directs their responses in the classroom. The SVPDP instructional environment thus is shaped not only by the students, their communities, and the general classroom environment, but also significantly by the instructional approaches used by the teachers themselves.

According to an eighth-grade teacher at Henry Middle School in Denver, students love SVPDP group work. She noted that students "are used to the 'pairs' thing, so this is a nice change for them" and that "the kids seem to enjoy it. They really liked talking about Social Compacts and then applying that to the Mayflower Compact."[61] At times, however, researchers observed that students had a difficult time concentrating on an SVPDP activity when someone did not directly supervise the work of the group. This reality may help explain one student's comment: "I hate this group activity stuff."[62] He appeared frustrated with the activity and wanted more direction from the teacher. Balancing student group independence and student group supervision is vital to nurturing a positive group learning environment for students. Indeed, the amount of teacher supervision and guidance that is necessary in a classroom depends on the characteristics of the classroom and its students.

For example, researchers observed one SVPDP teacher attempting to use a group exercise who appeared uncomfortable with this teaching approach and, as a result, gave vague directions to her students about the goal of the exercise. Students began to chatter and became increasingly disengaged from the SVPDP material. The girls in the class formed groups among themselves and began the activity while carrying on conversations, but many of the boys did not even form groups. One boy sat alone, while some of the other boys did not move from their row seating and simply turned to converse with one another. As the researchers walked around the classroom, stopping at different groups to listen to their conversations, they noticed that many students were having a tough time reading and comprehending the material. Students appeared particularly frustrated during the collective discussion and had difficulty getting through the material without guidance.[63]

While group work is a factor that can negatively alter the classroom environment, when it is used with care, guidance, and supervision, and, most important, with confidence by the teacher, it is an effective instructional method. In Brooklyn, researchers observed an SVPDP lesson on the three branches of government and on checks, balances, and the distribution of power. The class formed three groups, and each one was responsible for

describing the roles and responsibilities of the branch it represented. Students' depth of knowledge of the veto process and of judicial review was extremely impressive. Several students' knowledge far surpassed the understanding most adults have concerning the presidential veto and the process for overriding it. Knowledge is a foundation that can help teachers determine the best use of groups and the amount of supervision and guidance that students need in order to accomplish their classroom work. This Brooklyn example suggests that independence of group work may be correlated with the students' knowledge of the material. That is not to say that group work as an SVPDP classroom activity cannot be used with information that is new to the students. Rather, students' and teacher familiarity with the material may better guide a teacher in using group work to create a positive classroom environment in the implementation of the SVPDP.

Group work also can shape classroom debates among students and enlighten them about one another's views and opinions. In one of the Jefferson County SVPDP classrooms, researchers observed a disagreement break out when one of the boys said that maybe sixth graders were too young for the SVPDP. In contrast, one of the girls in the group said that she thought that younger students learn the concepts of citizenship more easily. She said, "This prepares you for life and growing up."[64] Furthermore, the girl reminded the boy that when they go to middle school next year, they will be able to run for student council, "and now we know how."[65] The boy backed down and changed his mind. Overall, the whole class agreed that the SVPDP lessons were more "real life" than anything else they have studied.[66]

Researchers also observed an example of a role-play that enhanced the instructional atmosphere during a visit to an SVPDP class in Los Angeles. When the students finished writing the "To Do" assignment, the teacher used a lively lecture, combined with role play with a student, to illustrate the abuse of authority. Another student queried, "Isn't misuse of authority when a police car turns on a siren just to turn a corner and then turns it off again?"[67] The teacher discussed the authority of military officers and what it means to be qualified for a position of authority. He explained that the word "vested," as used in the Declaration of Independence, originated from a garment given to leaders that indicated power and rank. A student commented that it is "like the equivalent of a crown given to a king." Then the class brainstormed desired characteristics, or qualifications, of two authority figures—a teacher and police officer.[68] Their responses follow:

> Police Officer: athletic, hardworking, considerate, loyal, knows people, discipline, fair
>
> Teacher: degree, fair, respectful, controls temper, patient, not racist, understanding.[69]

By using the board to outline and compare the characteristics of the "ideal" police officer and the "ideal" teacher, the SVPDP teacher effectively used a visual aid to engage the students and keep them interested in the material. In addition to the visual engagement, the paired characteristics of the police officer and the teacher helped students critically differentiate between the role of teacher and the role of police officer in their community.

Unfortunately, throughout the discussion, several students in this LAUSD classroom were distracted. Some sat passively, and others looked as if they were daydreaming. Only a few of the students were actively involved. Some students talked excessively, and others told them to "shut up."[70] The teacher sent one boy to an isolated area, a single chair facing the wall. Still, the boy continued to create distractions. Toward the end of the class, there was a bigger breakdown in the students' behavior as side chatter overpowered the teacher-led discussion.

Based on the researchers' observations, this breakdown in class discipline and learning occurred because of the large size of the class. Thus, while there was initial success using a role-play, other environmental factors hindered the instructional atmosphere. In addition, the teacher remained at the front of the class; had he moved about the room, students may have participated more, or at least not created as many distractions.

In Philadelphia, the researchers met with three small groups of students and asked them questions about the general climate at their school and about their SVPDP classes. Student responses varied from enthusiasm to boredom. However, all of the students said that they enjoyed working in groups and making presentations, and that this was the best component of the program. One girl complained that the teacher "talks too much" and wished that they would do more group work.[71] When asked why they liked group work, students replied that it is easier to accomplish projects together than working alone. Through group work, the Philadelphia SVPDP students felt more involved in their classroom activities and learned more of the curricular content. Yet, what is important, as evidenced by all SVPDP sites visited, is not so much the instructional method as the instructional environment. The teacher, as the primary enabling actor in the classroom, creates the instructional environment. His or her methods for implementing the SVPDP should depend on the instructional environment and the classroom factors.

Special Student Populations

While the teacher has a dominant role in shaping the environment of the classroom, students and their responses to their environments play an equally important role in framing the instructional environment for SVPDP implementation. During site visits, the researchers observed SVPDP classes with diverse special student populations. In addition to its use in general education classes, the SVPDP is used in English as a second language (ESL) classes, special education classes, and gifted student classes. This variety in student populations illustrates the widespread potential use of the SVPDP.

Immigrant Students

In January 2000, the researchers had an opportunity to visit an SVPDP bilingual classroom in Queens. As the bell rang to begin the class period, the teacher loudly spoke over the noise of the students, dramatically saying, "Okay, let's get ready to rumble," the stereotypical opening for professional wrestling matches.[72] It was obvious that this was his usual method of calling the class to order, as several students found their seats, quickly got quiet, and prepared to begin class. The Queens teacher set up an easel from which the students could read and use different colors—blue, red and yellow—for

different class themes, all of which were written in English. Students took turns reading the phrases and then discussing them. They were particularly enthusiastic about reading in English.

The topic of the observed lesson was the rationale behind governments and laws. The SVPDP teacher did a good job of relating the material to the lives of his students, using his Colombian background to help construct this bridge. Many of the examples he used to convey the context of the lesson were taken from Latin America. For example, he asked the question, "Who is the George Washington of Latin America?"[73] Several students gave answers, with a few responding, "Simon Bolivar," to which he added, "Yes, Simon Bolivar is the Washington of Latin America."[74]

The researchers also met with another bilingual class in Queens. While the students had many good things to say about the SVPDP materials, their enthusiasm and display of knowledge may also be attributed to the positive environment nurtured by their teacher. Their critical thinking regarding the content illustrates that the ability of a teacher, teaching in Spanish, can motivate interaction among students to help them learn and progress. One student in particular asked why the books fail to mention issues such as modern slavery. In fact, she made the point that, at home, she listens to news that suggests that there are still farmers in the United States who are mistreated and not properly compensated for their labor. To her, this was essentially modern slavery. It was a very interesting and well-considered perspective.

Other students joined in the conversation, noting that understanding the United States government was important in addressing such current issues. One student commented that "We live in the United States, and you need to know the ideas of government…you have to participate."[75] Another student responded, "But there is a limit to government—you cannot just do what you want on your own property—like making too much noise."[76] The students linked current events and problems in their communities to civics and citizenship participation. As one student concluded, "We have to vote; if we don't, then other people will tell us what to do."[77] In sum, the students in this SVPDP class displayed both English-speaking ability and a depth of understanding of responsible citizenship; indeed, five of them who participated in the discussion demonstrated a high proficiency in English.

A non-English speaking SVPDP class at the Academy for New Americans in Queens offers another exemplary illustration. Researchers observed an advanced ESL class of 20 students who had emigrated from approximately ten countries. The topic of the lesson was power and authority. The teacher split the students into small groups in order to get them involved in discussing the issues, which was particularly difficult considering the language barriers. Many students took the initiative to go to the classroom bookcase, where they found dictionaries in their native languages. They worked through the sentences, uncovered the issues, and then attempted to identify and justify whether statements were about power or authority.

During this observed class, several students expressed their belief that students had the "right" to occupy the principal's office to demonstrate their support for the placement of

security guards and metal detectors in their school. In their opinion, students had the right (*el direcho*) to feel safe. Another interesting discussion occurred when the teacher asked students to respond to the following question: "Your father grounded you because you broke your curfew—is this an example of power, authority, or both?" When a student was asked to define curfew, he explained that it "is when the people go out late and the police shoot them."[78] When the teacher inquired about his country of origin, several students responded, "Palestine." Afterward, the teacher effectively smoothed over this communication difficulty and moved on, keeping the students involved and interested.

The varied responses in such SVPDP classrooms are shaped by the differing backgrounds of students. Particularly in the case of new Americans, the diversity of perspectives complements and enhances the SVPDP lessons on tolerance while teaching through practice the importance of democracy. Having immigrants from all over the world who speak myriad languages in a classroom fosters the development of a positive forum for understanding the role of the citizen and for implementing the SVPDP.

Gifted and Special Education Students

Several gifted student and special education student classes are participating in the first year of the SVPDP. The successes in these particular classrooms, which tend to have a different instructional environment than SVPDP general education classrooms, reveal the broad flexibility and utility of the SVPDP and its instructional materials. Through the SVPDP, civics becomes a universal framework for all classrooms seeking to encourage critical thinking skills among students on issues of nonviolence and the democratic resolution of societal ills.

When researchers visited an SVPDP class of gifted students in Queens, the teacher began the class period by entertaining comments from the students about the SVPDP. Students responded with enthusiasm. One student commented, "It gives us courage to be ourselves."[79] Another noted, "It teaches you about police and what are your rights."[80] Another connected her everyday life to the history of government: "We see situations of other countries. We see real situations of other governments like feudalism. We understand other governments."[81] Many students had positive comments about the materials and the SVPDP initiative.

The students were very intelligent, eloquent, and talkative. They also seemed to have a very good relationship with their teacher, who obviously enjoys them and enjoys teaching. The teachers told the researchers that the "kids use the intellectual tools to solve problems. They love this stuff."[82]

The teacher's style was engaging, and her students were very excited about the SVPDP discussion. This may have been caused by the researchers' presence in the room, but it also seemed that they enjoyed the materials—and they definitely enjoyed the teacher, who was motivating, quick to smile, and humorous. The teacher also did an excellent job relating the SVPDP materials to students' lives and using the Socratic method to get students to analyze critically the topics. Only a small portion of the class was lecture, as

the teacher essentially introduced an idea to the class, normally through a question, and then allowed students to debate the issues and come up with answers.

The teacher taught about justice, using a scenario on whether a non-swimmer should be allowed to buy a house by a lake. The students had different opinions, but the teacher did a good job of acting as mediator while also offering her own opinion, which worked well in the discussion and was not intimidating to the students. The teacher was able to create a warm and supportive classroom environment, placing herself in the shoes of her students and presenting herself as an equal. The openness of the classroom fostered a tolerant, respectful instructional environment.

One SVPDP special education teacher in Queens noted to the researchers that "when we do these lessons, [the students] are ripping each other apart because they are trying to figure out who is right. Sometimes it just takes too long."[83] Although this teacher is one of the teachers using the elementary (i.e., Level I) versions of the CCE texts in the SVPDP, she applauded the versatility of the materials. She noted that "current events issues worked great with the interview sheets [in *Project Citizen*]—I used school violence as the issue. The kids interviewed other kids about school violence. I had them put the responses on poster board, and then they presented to the class. They did a great job of putting material together."[84] Even though this SVPDP class was both bilingual and special education, the teacher succeeded in creating a learning environment through the use of pictures, giving students opportunities to express themselves in a variety of ways.

An SVPDP special education teacher in Brooklyn commented during an SVPDP teacher training session that he sent his students home to test their parents on some of the civics principles they had been discussing in class. The teacher reported that, in almost every instance, his students knew more than the parents. Creating an instructional environment that highlights the achievement of knowledge is particularly helpful for special education students, who often are viewed as low achievers.[85]

In Los Angeles, gifted student classes participate in a technology program that gives students better access to computers in the classroom. Because one SVPDP teacher participates in the technology program, he is one of the few teachers who has several computers in his classroom to facilitate student learning and research. Thus, he is able to integrate technology into the SVPDP lessons, e.g., to conduct community research for *Project Citizen*.

While the physical "extras" like computers aid in creative instruction, the successful use of the SVPDP in diverse special student population classrooms illustrates the flexibility and the potential for effective integration of the SVPDP into all kinds of curricula and classrooms. These opportunities foster an instructional environment that is flexible with respect to both medium and method, thus improving students' attitudes and their access to information and quality instruction.

Classroom and School Management Policies that Shape the SVPDP Instructional Environment

Teachers are both facilitators of learning and managers of the classroom environment. Whether through leadership skills, classroom rules, or strict discipline, a teacher's management style shapes the SVPDP instructional environment. How a teacher manages a classroom affects the classroom experience and is a critical factor that can swing a student's learning experience from ineffective to effective, or vice versa. It is a constant battle for teachers to gauge student behavior and background, act accordingly, and be consistent, setting a precedent for students while nurturing a positive classroom environment. On a macro level, school policies also influence the learning environment, negatively as well as positively.

Teachers as Classroom Managers

Teachers not only convey academic material to their students but also serve as role models for the students in class discussions and activities. Students daily witness the teacher's conduct in and management of the classroom. Teacher classroom conduct and management that leads students to respond to and stay focused on the lessons can significantly shape the implementation and success of a program such as the SVPDP.

In Queens, the SVPDP teachers used various classroom management techniques, some of which worked better than others. In one classroom, the teacher's charisma alone controlled the class, while at the same time maintaining an open learning environment for students. For example, researchers observed the teacher asking questions to the class as a whole, encouraging students to shout out their answers. The teacher posed questions like "Who are the citizens?" with class responses of "We are!"[86] In response to the question "What would happen if we had no government?" a student answered, "Everyone would go crazy!"[87]

The Queens SVPDP students talked about their own school atmosphere, specifically mentioning the need for a leader or a teacher, the need for a pass to go to the bathroom, and the need for school rules so that students do not fight or argue. During the researchers' observations of a Queens SVPDP bilingual class, the teacher moved in and out of speaking Spanish, engaging his students through a fast-paced, entertaining teaching style. The students appeared to enjoy the material and were challenged by the content; they were interested in gaining a better understanding and in arguing about the concepts of government. The teacher's extremely active and enthusiastic lecture style kept students interested in the lesson rather than in side chatter with each other. There was a lot of laughing and smiling by students and the teacher during the lesson.[88]

Incentives for student achievement are another example of a management technique for minimizing discipline issues. A Brooklyn SVPDP teacher, who at a fall 1999 SVPDP teacher training session had reported that her students were having significant discipline problems, proudly reported at a later teacher training session that two of her students had written essays on authority that were chosen to be read over the public announcement

system at her school. This teacher noted that she was particularly encouraged because many students in her class would normally qualify as special needs students were it not for the fact that the special education sections were already overflowing in the Brooklyn public schools.[89]

While difficult for teachers to maintain, consistency in classroom management is important for students. It is a classroom factor that is dependent on the external environment and the personalities of the students themselves. Whether through a set of rules, established student-teacher respect, or disciplinary actions, consistency is critical to successful instruction and effective program implementation. Through consistent management, students are aware of the consequences and expectations in the classroom. Without good classroom management, it is difficult for any student to learn effectively.

Student Behavior

Student behavior also influences the instructional environment relating to the SVPDP implementation. While influenced by a teacher's classroom management and rapport with students, such behavior is an important factor in achieving discussion, respect, and interaction in the classroom. Together with classroom management, student behavior can make or break the successful implementation of the SVPDP.

In Wake County, researchers observed an SVPDP class that was discussing its preliminary plans for *Project Citizen*. Before class, while the teacher and the assistant principal conversed about school discipline, the assistant principal gave an example of the school's no-tolerance policy. She referred to a situation concerning a student who came to school with blue hair. The child was immediately sent home, setting an example for other students that improper attire and hair would not be tolerated. As the researchers observed the SVPDP class discussion to identify possible *Project Citizen* topics, the students initially failed to participate in the discussion. Then, one student made the connection between the generic "student empowerment" topic for the day, which the class thought was unimportant, and the student with the blue hair who was sent home from the school. From that point on, a wonderful debate ensued in the class, with the teacher playing the devil's advocate. The teacher later commented, however, that the school administration was trying to put that incident in the past and noted that the class could not use it for its SVPDP *Project Citizen* portfolio topic.

In cases such as this, the students themselves influence the instructional environment in the classroom. When a teacher honors a student's discovery by promoting discussion, even though it may be on a controversial topic, it generates debate and dialogue about procedure and fairness. Understandably, students often are more interested in the events occurring in their own school and community than in any other events.

Even in educational environments that mirror the community's challenging socioeconomic reality, student attitude and behavior can generate positive support for participation in the SVPDP. At Sun Valley Middle School in Los Angeles, for example, the researchers talked with students from two different SVPDP classes. Three students interviewed agreed that they feel safe at school and that fights on campus are rare.

Scheduled to be on vacation the week after they spoke with the researchers, two girls planned to spend the two months helping the school's IMPACT coordinator, and one girl planned to work for the city's Green and Clean Program. The shared enthusiasm about responsible citizenship evidenced by these students results in stronger peer support for the goals of the SVPDP. Whether or not the SVPDP is partly responsible for the students' desire to serve their neighborhood, it is clear that they are committed to strengthening their communities.

Nevertheless, the researchers noted that students as individuals are frustrated in these environments and want to alter their surroundings. One SVPDP student in Los Angeles expressed to the researchers his indignation at the violent climate of the schools and neighborhoods: "Violence and gangs are bad for kids. We need to be protected; after all, we are the future. The gangs that hang out on 18th Street come to the school to make graffiti. I feel bad when I see it because it is really ugly and expensive for the school to take off the walls."[90] Another student agreed and said that the school can't afford to be spending its money that way. "Instead," he said, "the school should invest money in computers, new desks and tables, and, especially, classrooms!"[91]

As these same LAUSD students continued their conversation with the researchers about their SVPDP class, one student explained that the class discussions have reinforced her value of open-mindedness and tolerance. She explained that, as an immigrant, she often feels that "Americans" belittle her; but now she understands that she has rights and liberties, too. Another student agreed: "This class has taught me to be more open-minded; not to be prejudiced. And that prejudice is wrong."[92] The students concluded the conversation with a commentary comparing the American and Mexican school systems. One student noted, "I like school in the U.S. because students don't have to buy the books or pay for other school stuff. We have more chances to receive an education here. But in Mexico, the education that students receive is more advanced."[93]

Students, as illustrated through the challenges faced by these immigrant students in Los Angeles, can positively affect their attitudes and those of other individuals around them regarding citizenship, responsibility, and nonviolence. The upbeat attitudes observed among SVPDP immigrant students in Queens, Brooklyn, and Los Angeles offer a unique opportunity to develop and nurture students' enthusiasm for being Americans and members of a democratic society and, in turn, to resolve problems through critical thinking and diplomacy in place of violence.

While student attitudes in all SVPDP district sites range from extremely positive to extremely negative, students' commitment to creating change and to securing nonviolent environments in school and community is evident. Teachers, in turn, must find ways to manage classroom environments that uphold and nurture students' positive views toward democratic solutions to violence and conflict. Through teacher consistency, leadership, and relationships with students, combined with the implementation of the SVPDP and its emphasis on critical thinking, civic engagement, civic knowledge, and civic dispositions, these goals are achievable.

School Policies

The instructional environment in a classroom and school is not solely dependent upon how teachers manage their classrooms and how students behave; school policies add another layer of influence. School policies individualize schools, distinguishing them from other schools in the district. For example, school policies may govern student dress and behavior, as well as the school environment. While some SVPDP schools that researchers visited have distinct school policies separate from their district policies, other SVPDP schools do not. Instead, these latter schools simply refer to district policies on matters of discipline and management. However, even if an individual school relies entirely on its district's policies, the school's interpretations of district policies can shape its instructional environment in ways different from the interpretations of neighboring schools in the same district. Likewise, the variations in school policies among schools within a district, even if small, can shape the learning environment in a classroom, including a classroom in which the SVPDP is being used.

In the Wake County Public School System, the researchers met with school administrators in an effort to better understand how school policies may shape classroom environments. At East Cary Middle School, discipline seems to be a very important issue. While there have been no major discipline problems, the school administration is much attuned to the potential for eruptions. The assistant principal told researchers they "run a tight ship and have firm and consistent discipline policies." It was in this school that the student whose blue hair was deemed to be "distracting" was not allowed to enter school until he washed out the dye.[94] Interestingly, as discussed earlier in this chapter, SVPDP students in this school discussed the "blue hair" incident in their SVPDP class and viewed the student's punishment as unfair and unjust.

This Wake County school has a policy that reads: "Rumors are not acceptable at East Cary Middle School."[95] This complements a system that the school developed in response to a scary bathroom vandalism incident for determining when any student is out of his or her classroom at any time. The incident in question involved graffiti in a girls' restroom that said, "If you think Columbine was bad, wait until Field Day." (Field day is an outdoor activity day annually celebrated by East Cary Middle School.) Nothing happened, but after the Columbine High School shootings, the East Cary Middle School incident was not taken lightly and was thoroughly investigated.[96]

Discipline policies in the SVPDP schools, as well as federal and state laws, may affect the teachers' and students' attitudes and perceptions about the fairness of school and district discipline systems. In one school, an SVPDP teacher remarked that students witness the emotionally disturbed students "getting away with things" because students can only receive 13 suspensions in a year, thus leaving the non-special education students feeling resentful. This school has a number of school-based programs, especially for children with emotional or behavioral problems. Suspensions are infrequent, and instead the school refers the students to counseling sessions or arranges parent-teacher conferences. If appropriate, the school administration may include an anger management session with the guidance counselor as an alternative to suspension.[97]

SVPDP students in this same school reported that some of the school's students receive greater punishment than others for the same offense, although the researchers saw no evidence of these variations. The students told the researchers that the special education students, who make up about five percent of the school's student population, rarely receive punishment. One student remarked, "The principal is mean and yells only at certain students.... She suspended me for no reason," and another remarked that they usually get detention for "stupid stuff," like chewing gum, verbal abuse, and talking in class. A student added, "I'm surprised that they don't have detention for talking in the halls."[98]

School policies that are inconsistent in their application create problems not only among students in the school, but also among parents. An SVPDP teacher in Philadelphia commented at an SVPDP teacher training session that last year, when she was at a different school, a student threatened to kill her; however, "nothing happened, because the schools are scared of the parents."[99] This student, who was having problems in her class, told the teacher that she and her mother were documenting all of the things that the teacher communicated to the student. At this point, a majority of the teachers participating in this SVPDP teacher training session said that parents can be a source of problems, and that one factor is "the education [levels] of the parents."[100] Similarly, an SVPDP teacher in Queens faced problems in managing classroom behavior due to students' family and home influences. The teacher reported that when she called a student's home to complain to the parents about the student's use of profanity in the classroom, the parent responded by using profanities against the child. The teacher acknowledged the irony of the situation and the continual frustration with having to combat external community and home factors inside the classroom as she implemented the SVPDP. School discipline policies by no means can control student behavior. Nevertheless, policies tailored to the specific environment of a school definitely can help shape classroom instructional environments and create a more democratic and exemplary learning atmosphere for students.

In some SVPDP schools, the researchers saw no evidence of problems resulting from inconsistent application of school discipline policies. For example, in Jefferson County, which is the only first-year SVPDP site in which sixth-grade classrooms are participating, a researcher had an opportunity to visit elementary schools in which the SVPDP is being implemented. The teachers in these classrooms did not discuss school discipline policies at all, nor did they note any serious violence or behavioral problems among their students or in their schools. The fact that these SVPDP teachers are in elementary schools may help account for this lack of discussion. Very young children are less likely to engage in violent or destructive behavior than older students, and so classroom management policies may be more of a factor in these elementary schools than school or district discipline policies.

Yet Jefferson County Public Schools administrators are taking a proactive approach to the threat of school violence. All schools in the district are now setting up crisis response teams to deal with emergencies. Each team includes the school's principal, secretary, and custodian, as well as parents and mental health professionals. Each school will compile

an emergency manual so that all school officials will follow the same plan.[101] This is part of the response to the Columbine High School incident in spring 1999, with school administrators across the nation taking precautions to lessen the likelihood of such an incident in their respective schools and districts.

While not directly related to discipline policies, one SVPDP school in Denver has adopted a unique decision making process intended to be both inclusive and influential with respect to the school's environment. Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) is a program in which staff, students, parents, and community members serve together in planning and problem solving sessions to improve the educational achievements of the school's students and to increase the effectiveness of the school's staff and parents in this educational effort. Meeting twice monthly, the CDM committee consists of four elected teachers, four parent representatives, one business representative, one classified staff representative, two students, and the school principal. As a model of shared governance, the CDM committee emphasizes that those individuals most affected by a school decision should participate in the making of that decision.[102] This democratic approach reinforces the critical thinking skills, civic participation, and civic dispositions that are central to the SVPDP and necessary for informed and responsible citizenship.

Many SVPDP schools have additional policies regarding dress, hallway pass requirements, and classroom etiquette that are distinctive to these schools. These policies help create a school's climate. As observed by the researchers, the school and classroom policies of the SVPDP schools range from inconsistent and chaotic to uniform and stable. The ways in which students behave, react, and interact with their peers, their teachers, and their communities all contribute to the success or failure of a school policy, as well as to its impact on SVPDP implementation. The schools need to foster an environment with respect to school policies that enables them to guide students and teachers toward mutual respect and distributive justice. The objectives, materials, and activities of the SVPDP seek to foster such an environment.

School policies that create and sustain instructional environments appropriate to the school campus are important factors that contribute to student learning and the implementation of the SVPDP. Such policies go beyond discipline and zero-tolerance policies—they include, for example, team teaching, looping, parental involvement, and teacher-parent communications. Some SVPDP schools, as those in Denver and Jefferson County, have very specific school-based policies and discipline codes, beyond what is district-mandated. Other SVPDP schools, as those in Queens, do not have school policies beyond those promulgated and required by the district. These policies can nurture strong environments, yielding "best practices" like the CDM committee in Denver, or can create frustration on the part of students and teachers, as in Philadelphia.

Conclusions

As this chapter shows, a variety of classroom and school factors contribute to the physical, instructional, and policy environment shaping the implementation of the

SVPDP. In addition, several actors—including teachers, students, administrators, and community members—help shape these factors, and thus the SVPDP implementation.

In considering the physical environment within the classroom, several factors contribute to how well teachers implement the SVPDP and how easily the students carry out the lessons and learn the material. Small student class size and a comfortable classroom environment can positively influence teamwork and cooperative learning. Block scheduling and time flexibility enable teachers to integrate creatively the SVPDP materials into existing courses and to mentor students through culminating activities. Visual aids prove to be important in nurturing a positive student environment while advocating civic participation and values. Finally, the classroom furniture and "extras" such as computers and Internet access aid SVPDP implementation by motivating students to connect with their communities and gain broader civic perspectives through a variety of resources.

Even though visual displays and special resources may not seem like major factors, they do have an impact on the physical environment shaping SVPDP implementation. It is also clear that the SVPDP materials are most effective when they are language-appropriate. SVPDP schools that have non-English speaking students, parents, administrators, and community members can significantly assist in relieving student discomfort and creating a supportive learning community through the adoption and use of materials for the SVPDP and related programs that are language-appropriate. These initiatives welcome students into the classroom, creating a positive learning environment that is open to the instructional content and style in the SVPDP.

In addition to the physical environment, the classroom instructional environment has a dominant role in shaping the implementation of the SVPDP. The teaching methods, instructional materials, and other techniques that a teacher uses influence how students respond, how they learn, and how they achieve. SVPDP teachers use a diversity of methods, materials, and techniques to implement the SVPDP and motivate their classes. The program has encouraged this district-by-district and school-by-school variation and flexibility in order to enhance the likelihood of implementation. Even though this variation was not envisioned in the initial SVPDP implementation plan, it has been vital to the success of the program in meeting local requirements and local needs. Each SVPDP site and each SVPDP teacher personalized, to some extent, the program, tailoring it to the characteristics of district, school, and classroom, as well as the needs of the students in each site.

While the teacher has a dominant role in shaping the classroom environment and the SVPDP implementation in the classroom, students and their responses to their environments play an equally important role in framing the instructional environment. Students come from a variety of academic and family backgrounds, and their attitudes and responses to teachers and instructional materials set the tone of the classroom. What is very clear through this project assessment of SVPDP implementation is the broad applicability and universality of the SVPDP. In its first year, the program has been used in all kinds of classrooms, including those with gifted students, special education

students, and bilingual students (including recent immigrants). In the case of new Americans, the diversity of students' perspectives complements the SVPDP lessons of tolerance, while teaching through practice the importance of democracy. Having a classroom with immigrant students from all over the world, speaking various languages, fosters the development of a positive forum for understanding the role of the citizen and for accepting the diversity of one's community.

Finally, the classroom and school policy environment also contributes to successful SVPDP implementation. In addition to being facilitators of the instructional environment, teachers are managers of the classroom and interpreters of the policy environment. Whether through leadership skills, classroom rules, strict discipline, or other means, a teacher's management style shapes the SVPDP implementation. Although classroom management can be demanding for teachers, it sets the standard in a classroom and is one of the most effective ways in which teachers help to carry out a program such as the SVPDP.

Individual school policy is a factor often overlooked in program implementation because of the vague nature of policy. School and district policies, however, create a supportive framework for learning that responds to the distinctive needs and interests of a school campus. While many policies foster within-school communication, management efficiency, and program effectiveness, as well as continuous community, parent, and administrator involvement, they also may hinder the ability of teachers and students to create classroom environments appropriate for the SVPDP.

In conclusion, a variety of factors shapes a classroom. From furniture to posters, classroom size to computer access, teaching approach to student response, student background to teacher management, teaching and curriculum requirements to zero-tolerance discipline policies, the list of classroom factors that shape the SVPDP implementation is lengthy and complicated. There is no one right way to implement this program successfully. During the initial year of the SVPDP, however, many participating teachers and students in the seven district sites have recognized the diverse ways in which classroom factors shape implementation, and have successfully carried out a program that nurtures both nonviolence and responsible citizenship.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest how classroom and school factors can be influenced to improve SVPDP implementation.

Physical Environment

1. *The CCE should encourage districts and schools that participate in the SVPDP to schedule extended instructional periods for the SVPDP lessons and related activities.* Many SVPDP (i.e., CCE) lessons require extended time for completion, given the active engagement of students. Thus, the SVPDP lessons taught in traditional time periods are often left unfinished, or are not used to their best advantage in fostering student learning and understanding. To conduct the SVPDP lessons effectively,

particularly those that involve group work, role-plays, and culminating activities, the teachers require more than one standard class period. Thus, the CCE should actively encourage district and school administrators in those sites selected for SVPDP implementation to extend, in whatever ways are appropriate to the instructional policies and practices of the respective sites, the periods of time scheduled for SVPDP lessons.

2. *The CCE should provide additional resources to SVPDP teachers to enhance student learning of the SVPDP lessons, including both visual materials to reinforce the CCE lessons used in the SVPDP and visual displays for classroom use that complement and enhance the civics and nonviolence themes inherent in the SVPDP.* During the first-year implementation of the SVPDP, the CCE has provided SVPDP site coordinators and teachers with selected videos, posters, and other resources to reinforce the SVPDP themes of nonviolence and citizenship. The SVPDP participants frequently have expressed a desire for more such supplemental materials, particularly those that relate directly and explicitly to the CCE program texts used in the SVPDP. For example, the CCE might provide SVPDP teachers with classroom posters of the cartoons in the CCE texts to help students connect the visual displays in their classroom environment directly to the lessons. Because students today often are more attuned to visual media than books, the CCE could also develop electronic supplements such as interactive CD-ROMs and a student-friendly SVPDP website. Such resources would enhance SVPDP student learning as well as stimulate student (and teacher) interest in implementing the SVPDP.

3. *The CCE should develop classroom visual materials that supplement and reinforce SVPDP objectives, materials, and concepts in Spanish and other languages appropriate to the backgrounds of students in the SVPDP classrooms.* The SVPDP schools visited by researchers had appropriate SVPDP-related decorations on their walls. In order for the SVPDP to connect more effectively with all students in SVPDP classrooms with respect to matters of civic knowledge, civic dispositions, civic participation, non-intimidation, and nonviolence, however, the CCE should work with SVPDP site coordinators and teachers to identify visual materials in other languages that reflect perceptions and concepts of citizenship and violence in other cultures. In one SVPDP classroom, the poster that instructs students on what to do if they see a gun is a telling example: it is in Spanish, because the designers of the poster know that the message is too important to let a student's difficulty with the language get in the way. The lessons of the SVPDP ultimately are no less important than that poster on the wall. No matter their language or their ancestry, SVPDP students should feel as if the SVPDP is a program for them and their lives.

4. *The CCE should develop, working with SVPDP site coordinators and teachers, alternative models for how SVPDP teachers can create a physical environment in the classroom that enhances effective implementation of the SVPDP.* The SVPDP creates a demand for a nontraditional classroom environment that promotes collaborative interaction. The use of tables for students' group work is one feature of such an environment. The researchers, in their visits to SVPDP classrooms, witnessed the

important role played by the physical environment in aiding or inhibiting the lessons of the SVPDP. After one program year, there can be little doubt that SVPDP site coordinators and teachers have made their own discoveries about how an SVPDP classroom's physical environment can be improved. The CCE is in a unique position to facilitate the dissemination of these insights to all the participating schools and teachers, enabling each teacher to apply those lessons in ways with which he or she is comfortable. An SVPDP school district may even choose to designate one or two classrooms exclusively for the use of the SVPDP.

Instructional Environment

5. *The CCE should consider expanding the SVPDP into more schools and classrooms serving newly immigrated students, special education students, and gifted students.* These students offer special opportunities for the SVPDP; conversely, the lessons of the SVPDP should be particularly useful for them. For example, the SVPDP materials are important in helping immigrant students better understand their new country. Perhaps to a degree even greater than with American-born students, the lessons of the SVPDP seem to convey to immigrant children a sense of empowerment and belonging. Special student populations should also be included in the SVPDP because the program effectively reaches out to those who traditionally have been isolated from the regular curriculum. Whether the SVPDP is used in a special education class or a gifted class with vast resources, the program's message speaks to these student populations and can be a significant factor in their education. The SVPDP's nontraditional instructional materials and methods also fit well with these students' needs and abilities.

6. *The CCE should identify other programs with objectives similar to those of the SVPDP that may compete for classroom or extracurricular time and develop opportunities for collaboration.* On a school level, it is important for administrators and teachers to take into account their unique instructional environment. Whether that means considering special events or additional nonviolence programs, it is important for the CCE to continue to grant schools flexibility in their implementation of the SVPDP. Many SVPDP teachers become overwhelmed trying to satisfy all the requirements of the SVPDP while also preparing students for other district programs or activities that are viewed as equally important (e.g., National History Day activities). Because the goals of programs that compete with the SVPDP for class time often are similar to those of the SVPDP, SVPDP schools and teachers should explore opportunities to meet program objectives through collaboration, rather than viewing the situation as an "either-or" dilemma. SVPDP site coordinators and teachers must manage their limited time effectively, but it may be possible to collaboratively implement two or more programs in their classrooms.

Policy Environment

7. *The CCE should consider providing teachers with a teacher's guide to democratic classroom management.* Management is one of the toughest parts of a teacher's job. Providing teachers with guidance on how they can align their classroom management

practices with the content and lessons of the SVPDP strengthens the program's nonviolence and citizenship messages and creates a peaceful model to help students learn how to treat one another and solve problems. The recommendations of chapter 6 include providing teachers with better SVPDP curricular content guides and manuals of successful SVPDP teaching techniques. Effective and democratic class management is no less important in how a teacher implements the SVPDP. A "how-to" guide suggesting "best practices" with regard to management in a variety of classroom environments would be extremely helpful to both teachers and students.

8. *The CCE should encourage SVPDP school districts and schools to incorporate their disciplinary policy statements into the SVPDP lessons.* Teachers and students can use their own school policy statements to initiate lessons and discussions on any number of SVPDP topics, such as power and authority. Schools usually are the first place students encounter governmental institutions; school policies often are their first real experience with laws and their enforcement. Discipline policies, for example, are an excellent means by which teachers and students can make abstract concepts concrete, as illustrated by the suspension of one student with blue hair in one SVPDP classroom; this incident suddenly made the SVPDP ideas and theories more relevant to students' lives. The CCE should encourage teachers to look for and take advantage of these teachable moments. The SVPDP teachers' use of school policy statements to facilitate classroom discussion about these statements and their purpose also enables teachers to help parents learn about school policies by requiring students to question their parents about them as part of homework lessons.

Notes

[1] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 12, 1999.

[2] SVPDP Teacher interview, I.S. 235Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 12, 1999.

[3] SVPDP Classroom observations, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 17, 2000.

[4] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[5] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 19, 2000.

[6] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Hans Keyser, Assistant Principal, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, February 14, 2000.

[7] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Betsy Thompson, District Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Mary Atwater, Violence Prevention Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Ruth Schnidt, Community Volunteer, Jefferson County Public Schools, at Jefferson County Public Schools Safe and Drug Free Schools Office, Lakewood, Colorado, February 28, 2000.

[8] Interview by Kris Mack and Emily Roth with Chuck Dorman, School Resource Officer, East Cary Middle School, Wake County Public School System, Cary, North Carolina, February 22, 2000.

[9] Cope interview.

[10] Email message to Benjamin Crawford from Nancy Cope, District Social Studies Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, January 19, 1999.

[11] Dorman interview.

[12] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with an SVPDP Teacher, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Manual Diaz, Assistant Principal, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

[15] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Lynnette Lazarus, School Nurse, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 17, 2000.

[16] SVPDP Classroom observations, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, February 17, 2000.

[17] Interview by Delia Perez with Parent of SVPDP Student, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Francis Frain, President, Sunnyside Neighborhood Association, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[20] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[21] SVPDP Classroom observations by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Van Nuys, California, November 18, 1999.

[22] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 2, 1999.

[23] James Sterngold, "Los Angeles May Ease Up on School Promotion Policy," *The New York Times*, December 2, 1999, p. 20A.

[24] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Nancy Cope, District Social Studies Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999.

[25] SVPDP Classroom observations by Kris Mack and Emily Roth, East Millbrook Middle School, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 22, 2000.

[26] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack, I.S. 55K, Oceanhill-Brownsville Secondary School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 22, 1999.

[27] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[28] LBJ School SVPDP Follow-up Questionnaire for Site Coordinators, April 2000.

[29] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, November 19, 1999.

[30] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 55K, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), November 22, 1999.

[31] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with an SVPDP Teacher, I.S. 235Q, Academy for New Americans, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 12, 1999.

[32] SVPDP Classroom observations by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales, Conwell Middle School, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 12, 1999.

[33] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with an SVPDP Teacher, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[34] SVPDP Teacher interview, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, November 2, 1999.

[35] SVPDP Classroom observations by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[36] SVPDP Classroom observations, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 18, 1999.

[37] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 28, 2000.

[38] SVPDP Teacher interview, I.S. 235Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), November 12, 1999.

[39] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack, I.S. 275K, Thelma J. Hamilton School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 12, 2000.

[40] SVPDP Classroom observations by Elizabeth Ann Witt, Eiber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Lakewood, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[41] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with SVPDP Students, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 17, 2000.

[42] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack, I.S. 298K, Dr. Betty Shabazz School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 23, 1999.

[43] SVPDP Classroom observations by Elizabeth Ann Witt, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Westminster, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[44] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with an SVPDP Teacher, I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 28, 2000.

[45] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga, Angela Hernandez, and Samantha Wallack with Kathleen Cashin, Superintendent, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 14, 2000.

[46] Ibid.

[47] SVPDP Teacher interview, Horace Mann Middle School, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[48] SVPDP Classroom observations, Conwell Middle School, School District of Philadelphia, November 12, 1999.

[49] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[50] SVPDP Teacher interview, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, November 2, 1999.

[51] SVPDP Students interview, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, February 17, 2000.

[52] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack of SVPDP Lesson Presentation by Nicole Williams, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), in I.S. 284K, Lou Wallace School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 22, 1999.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, December 18, 1999.

[55] SVPDP Classroom observations, Eiber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, December 8, 1999.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 141Q, The Steinway School, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 31, 2000.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] SVPDP Teacher interview, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, November 2, 1999.

[62] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with SVPDP Students, Henry Middle School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 2, 1999.

[63] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 154Q, Joseph Pulitzer School, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 31, 2000.

[64] SVPDP Classroom observations by Elizabeth Ann Witt, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Wheat Ridge, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

[67] SVPDP Classroom observations, Mulholland Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, November 18, 1999.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] SVPDP Students interview, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, February 17, 2000.

[72] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] SVPDP Classroom observations by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl, I.S. 235Q, Academy for New Americans, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 12, 1999.

[79] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 31, 2000.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 29, 2000.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga with an SVPDP Teacher, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, December 18, 1999.

[86] SVPDP Classroom observations, I.S. 141Q, Community School District 30 (Queens), January 28, 2000.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), December 18, 1999.

[90] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with SVPDP Students, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Manzo interview.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

[97] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[98] SVPDP Students interview, George Sharswood Elementary School, School District of Philadelphia, February 17, 2000.

[99] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, February 19, 2000.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Thompson, Atwater, and Schnidt interview.

[102] Henry Middle School, *Student/Parent Handbook: 1999*, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, 1999, p. 10.

The SVPDP in Action: Community School District 30 (Queens)

Students Apply SVPDP Lessons to Citizenship and Current Events

In one SVPDP bilingual middle school class in Community School District 30 (Queens), the researchers observed a teacher engaging the students in a discussion about citizenship. He posed questions like "Who are the citizens?" that generated class responses of "We are!" In response to the question "What would happen if we had no government?" a student answered, "Everyone would go crazy!" Commenting on their school's atmosphere, the students talked about the importance of having a teacher, needing a pass to go to the bathroom, and having rules in the school so that students did not fight or argue.

In another SVPDP classroom in Community School District 30, a student asked the researchers why the SVPDP books fail to mention the issue of modern slavery. In fact, she made the point that, at home, she listens to the news with her parents and hears stories that suggest there are still farmworkers in the United States who are mistreated and not properly paid for their labor. To her, this is essentially modern slavery in the United States. Other students joined in the conversation, noting that understanding the United States government was important in addressing such current issues. One student commented, "We live in the United States, and you need to know the ideas of government…you have to participate." Another student responded, "But there is a limit to government—you cannot just do what you want on your own property—like making too much noise." The students linked current events and problems in their communities to civics and citizen participation. As one student concluded, "We have to vote; if we don't, then other people will tell us what to do."

Chapter 8. School District, Parent, and Community Factors Shaping SVPDP Implementation

The first-year implementation of the SVPDP has been influenced by several school district factors, as well as by parent and community influence and participation. The greatest district influence on the implementation has occurred through the participation of the district social studies coordinator and the SVPDP district contact. For example, the SVPDP district contact frequently has been responsible for talking with the principals in the district to encourage their schools and teachers to participate in the program. The district social studies coordinator often has helped the SVPDP site coordinator to overcome district obstacles to successful program implementation.

The discipline policies in each district are an important element of the SVPDP environment. These policies provide SVPDP students an opportunity to study and perhaps influence the policies that affect them; at the same time, however, inconsistent enforcement of policies in the first-year pilot districts can lessen the SVPDP development of positive student attitudes and behaviors. The district structure also shapes SVPDP implementation. If the district structure fosters both violence prevention and student, parent, and teacher involvement, the program is enhanced. On the other hand, in some SVPDP districts, factors such as school board politics or scarce resources have hindered the program.

Parental and community involvement provides important opportunities for successful SVPDP implementation and expansion. The parents and community members who have been involved in the first year of the SVPDP, mostly through the culminating activities, have been very impressed and enthusiastic about the program and its impact on participating students. This bodes well for continuing and expanding of the SVPDP in the pilot districts, as these advocates spread the word about the program to other parents and community members.

This chapter focuses first on the factors at the district level that have shaped the first-year implementation of the SVPDP. It then examines the role of parental participation and community involvement in that process, and then it explores briefly the greater parental and community environment in which the program exists and the influence this environment has had on program implementation. The chapter concludes with recommendations about how to enhance the effectiveness of the SVPDP through improved school district, parental, and community participation in it.

School District Factors

The characteristics of a school district in which the SVPDP is being implemented have an important influence on the success of the implementation. Some of the most important elements of the district environment include the district's SVPDP participants, discipline policies, structure, and other violence prevention programs.

District Social Studies Coordinators and SVPDP District Contacts

In the first year of the program, the district social studies coordinators and SVPDP district contacts have had the most opportunity to contribute to a smooth and efficient implementation in the pilot sites. In each SVPDP district, these individuals have been important in representing the district to the teachers and administrators and in helping to overcome bureaucratic obstacles to the program. The SVPDP district contact has played a different role in each district, depending on how directly involved the district administrators have been and what kind of relationship they have had with the SVPDP site coordinator and the district social studies coordinator. The SVPDP district contacts in Jefferson County, Denver, Queens, and Brooklyn seemed to the researchers to be the most involved in implementing and jump-starting the program by gaining the support of principals and by recruiting teachers to the program.

In some sites, communication and facilitation between school district personnel and the SVPDP has been easier and more effective when the same person has occupied two or more of the roles of district social studies coordinator, SVPDP site coordinator, and SVPDP district contact. In Denver and Philadelphia, for example, the same person has served as the SVPDP district contact and district social studies coordinator, which has made it easier to get school principals to implement the SVPDP in their schools.

In the Denver Public Schools, Neil Deason, district social studies coordinator, also serves as the SVPDP district contact. Prior to the first year of the SVPDP, he assessed the program and its applicability to the district's middle schools, which led to Denver's participation in the program. He also was key in identifying the teachers who were invited to participate in the SVPDP.[1] The Denver SVPDP site coordinator and teachers, as well as principals of the schools in which the program has been implemented in its first year, all reported that their high regard for Deason, as well as his advocacy and assessment of the SVPDP, played a strategic role in the district's participation in the SVPDP.[2]

In the School District of Philadelphia, Melvin Garrison is both the SVPDP district contact and the district social studies coordinator. He has assumed responsibility for all SVPDP matters relating to the district, and views himself as the conduit for the flow of SVPDP information and materials between the CCE and the district.[3] An important advantage of his familiarity with the school district is that he has been able to persuade school principals to allow the SVPDP in their schools.[4] Garrison visits the schools for SVPDP classroom observations and sets the dates and agendas of the SVPDP teacher training workshops. He also supports the SVPDP teachers and has asked them to call him if they have any problems or concerns about the program or its implementation. Indeed, as Garrison told the researchers, "Two or three teachers call once or twice a week."[5] According to the SVPDP site coordinator in Philadelphia, Garrison is the most knowledgeable person in the district about the logistics and details of SVPDP implementation.[6]

Whether or not they have had more than one role during 1999–2000, the SVPDP district contacts most often have been involved in helping to recruit teachers to participate in the

program. In the Jefferson County Public Schools, for example, school district officials are not allowed to approach teachers directly about participation in extra projects. Thus, after Brian Loney, the SVPDP site coordinator, had identified the teachers whom he wanted to participate in the SVPDP, he asked the SVPDP district contact, Cindy Stevenson, who is the deputy superintendent of the district, to call these teachers' principals. Stevenson is powerful, well-liked, and well-respected in the district, so none of the principals she called refused to participate. Loney pointed out that, for school principals, "it's an honor to be called by her."[7] The district social studies staff believes that, if Stevenson had not made these calls, they would not have been able to recruit the teachers whom they wanted as program participants.

When asked by a researcher about the fact that she personally made the calls to school principals to recruit the first-year SVPDP teachers, Stevenson responded, "Brian [Loney] needed help recruiting teachers. So I called the principals. We wanted really good people in order to start this program in the best of circumstances. We didn't want to destine them for failure and wanted to make sure that they felt supported in the process."[8] Thus, top-level district officials who are enthusiastic about the SVPDP play a critical role in shaping positively the program's implementation process.

In New York City, school district administrators also have helped the Queens and Brooklyn SVPDP site coordinators recruit teachers to participate in the SVPDP. In Community School District 30 (Queens), for example, one of the assistant superintendents distributed the email circular that invited teachers to volunteer to participate in the program.[9] In Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), Rebecca Skinner, the district's director of program development and the SVPDP district contact, and Nicole Williams, the SVPDP site coordinator, met with principals to introduce them to the program. Skinner and Williams established an informal network to enable the principals to discuss the program, after which they ascertained the interest among the principals. By May 1999, four principals had expressed interest in possibly implementing the SVPDP in their schools. Once Skinner and Williams had the support from the district and the principals, they helped the principals select the teachers.[10]

The critical importance of an effective working relationship between the SVPDP participants and a key school district official is obvious in districts such as the Wake County Public School System, where the 1999–2000 SVPDP site coordinator has never been a district employee. Because the Wake County school district policy severely limits outside access to the district's classrooms, the SVPDP site evaluator initially had a very difficult time observing the SVPDP classrooms during the first-year SVPDP implementation.[11] Later in the year, however, the district social studies coordinator and the SVPDP district contact helped facilitate SVPDP classroom observations.

The importance of the SVPDP district contacts and social studies coordinators to the SVPDP's pilot sites has been most evident in the assistance they have provided to the CCE's district SVPDP representatives in recruiting teachers and coordinating communication between the districts and these SVPDP representatives. Especially before and during the program's first year, the SVPDP district contacts have been

invaluable in gaining support for it from principals and helping to recruit teachers. A district social studies coordinator in a pilot district who is also an SVPDP representative provides substantial assistance with program implementation and proves to be an effective liaison between the district and the SVPDP. Those district social studies coordinators who have not been directly involved as site coordinators or district contacts have, however, played a more limited role in the first-year implementation of the SVPDP.

School District Discipline Policies

SVPDP teachers in some districts discussed school district discipline policies at the SVPDP teacher training workshops; typically, these policies react to and punish inappropriate student behavior. Although some policies of this sort are necessary, the SVPDP can be an important catalyst in changing them to be more inclusive of curricula-based and other school violence prevention strategies addressing students' antisocial and intolerant behaviors.

For instance, in Jefferson County, the district task force that was formed after the 1999 Columbine High School shootings recommended alternative strategies such as violence prevention projects and the placement of additional resource officers in schools, not the placement of additional security guards. The role of the resource officers is to form relationships with students, not follow them around the school and search their backpacks. These officers create support systems for students rather than acting in a punitive way.[12] The SVPDP's use of civic education curricular materials reinforces the district's emphasis on alternative violence prevention strategies and programs, and provides an opportunity for the district to further modify its discipline policies.

In the pilot districts, the first-year implementation of the SVPDP has demonstrated that it would be appropriate for students participating in the program to study their district discipline policies in the context of the SVPDP and to examine these with respect to such SVPDP civics concepts as the proper use of authority, due process, and democratic principles. For example, the School District of Philadelphia has produced a *Code of Student Conduct*, which carefully outlines district rules that supplement the laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.[13] This code could become, in effect, supplemental SVPDP curricular material for use in the Philadelphia SVPDP classrooms, thereby reinforcing the civics concepts at the heart of the SVPDP.

The SVPDP, thus, provides a prime opportunity for teachers to talk about district discipline policies with their students and to explore the rationale and enforcement of these policies, as well as their role in school violence prevention. District discipline policies also can negatively influence the SVPDP implementation, however. In Wake County, for instance, the SVPDP teachers expressed concern to the researchers that district discipline policies are inconsistently enforced, despite the district's stated "zero tolerance" policy.[14] In Philadelphia, the SVPDP teachers expressed the same concern. One teacher noted that, although her school is perceived to be an "academic" school, "stupid things still go on." One student received a three-day suspension for robbing a student, for example, leading students to believe that they can get away with bad behavior. As a teacher put it, "The kids think that 'zero tolerance' is a joke at this

school."[15] Such inconsistency in the enforcement of discipline policies is a significant challenge to the implementation of the SVPDP in some pilot sites. The SVPDP students' attitudes toward intolerance and antisocial behavior are less likely to change for the better through their participation in the SVPDP if a district's enforcement of its discipline policies sends mixed signals about the acceptability of negative student behavior.

School District Structure

The school district's organizational structure and funding, and their impact on teachers, administrators, and the community, also are factors that have influenced the SVPDP's first year. For example, new district organizational arrangements that foster greater community and parent participation can help the SVPDP implementation process. On the other hand, such district factors as school board politics can inhibit the SVPDP, because its administrators and teachers cannot adapt to the changes caused by such factors as rapidly as they occur.

In 1994, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) developed a new structure that empowers students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and community members to operate their schools; to set educational goals; and to develop standards for student achievement, behavior, safety, and parent and community involvement as joint stakeholders. This organizational restructuring of the district and its associated decision making processes has been carried out under the guidance of cluster leaders, each of whom is an experienced administrator appointed by the LAUSD superintendent to be responsible for the standards of student achievement and attendance, parent participation, collaboration, evaluation of principals, and implementation of state-required instructional guidelines throughout the school cluster for which he or she is responsible.[16] By enhancing connections between students, parents, teachers, and the community, this cluster structure appears to the researchers to enhance the effectiveness of the SVPDP implementation in the LAUSD. At the same time, however, the LAUSD has faced involuntary turnover in the superintendent position, and school board politics that have created challenges to the implementation of the SVPDP.

In New York City, because of the politics of education and the recent turnovers in the New York City Board of Education's chancellor position, the administrators and teachers receive little direct assistance for their schools and classrooms. They also rarely take note of changes in citywide district structures and policies. As the Queens SVPDP site coordinator noted, "This is New York City. It is difficult to keep track of the whims of the school board."[17] The stress induced by the city's education infrastructure is important in understanding the obstacles that the Queens, as well as the Brooklyn, SVPDP teachers have faced in seeking to implement the SVPDP during 1999–2000, and the slowness with which the SVPDP curricular materials can be integrated into existing curricula and courses. Therefore, any progress in conducting the SVPDP culminating activities and in integrating the CCE curricular materials into regular curricula in these sites is exceptional, because the SVPDP teachers face a range of very difficult district factors (e.g., physical constraints, curricular constraints, administrative constraints).

In Jefferson County, raising money for the public schools has been difficult, despite the relative affluence of many of the district's residents. Local school funding in Colorado comes from mill levies (property taxes), and several times over the last few years voters in Jefferson County have rejected proposals to raise mill levies. Recently, a mill levy increase finally passed, but that increase is tied to accountability requirements (i.e., pass rates on the state's standardized exams). The SVPDP site coordinator notes that several teachers in the district had threatened to quit if the mill levy failed to pass, because they viewed the previous failed levies as evidence of lack of community support for schools. Even though the recent levy passed, many teachers are still unhappy, because the increased funding is contingent upon the district and its schools achieving specified levels of achievement on standardized tests. Indeed, the Jefferson County Public Schools decided to participate in the SVPDP in part because the program's training and materials are provided at no cost to the district, which is a real plus given the district's relatively tight budget.[18]

When the CCE selects school districts for future-year SVPDP implementation, it should take into account district infrastructure and politics, because such factors shape the program. School districts that have instituted new approaches to increase the involvement of teachers, parents, and community members in sustaining an active learning environment for students are excellent sites for SVPDP implementation. Conversely, the first year of the program has shown that district factors, such as limited funding and school board politics, may adversely affect the implementation of the SVPDP.

Other District Violence Prevention Programs

According to Pam Riley, director of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence, 78 percent of school districts nationwide are implementing some sort of violence prevention program; to her knowledge, however, not one program is civic education curricula-based.[19] This confirms the uniqueness of the SVPDP in school violence prevention.

At the same time, in the first-year SVPDP pilot sites, a variety of violence prevention programs are being implemented at the district level. In general, the role of the district is to coordinate, disseminate information about, and acquire and distribute funding for these programs. In Jefferson County and Los Angeles, for example, the school district seeks to coordinate the violence prevention programs offered to schools, and allows each school to choose which programs are best suited to its needs.

In the Jefferson County Public Schools district, the Safe and Drug Free Schools Office directs the district's violence prevention efforts. This office was set up in response to title IV of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which distributes money to the states for school safety, drug, and alcohol programs. Colorado allocates its title IV money to school districts on the basis of need. Jefferson County is not a high-need district, so it receives relatively little money ($330,000 in 1999–2000). After Jefferson County receives its funding allocation, the district approves a list of programs on which schools are allowed to spend their Safe and Drug Free Schools money. Schools also may implement other violence prevention programs not approved by the district, but these

programs cannot be funded by the Safe and Drug Free Schools money and are not reported to the district office.[20]

Jefferson County Public Schools also has hired a district violence prevention coordinator. Funding for this position has come from the Healing Fund, which was set up through the United Way to process and distribute donations made to the district after the 1999 Columbine High School shootings. Much of the money has come from the Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation, with additional funds contributed by the Jefferson Foundation. The Healing Fund money has been distributed to a number of school district offices for use in violence prevention programs; one of the recipients has been the Jefferson County Safe and Drug Free Schools Office.[21] The fact that Jefferson County has a district violence prevention coordinator and has actively implemented and funded a range of violence prevention programs in its schools has created an excellent environment within which to introduce the SVPDP.

In the Los Angeles Unified School District, the California Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office (SSVPO) offers assistance, training, materials, and support for grant programs to foster the development of safe schools and communities. A variety of programs are available for California school districts, including California Safe Schools Assessment, Conflict Resolution and Youth Mediation, Counseling and Guidance, Hate-Motivated Behavior Violence Prevention, High-Risk Youth Education and Public Safety Program, Gang Risk Intervention Program, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, School/Law Enforcement Partnership, School Community Policing Partnership Program, Student Leadership Grant Program, and the Targeted Truancy and Public Safety Program.[22] The LAUSD publicizes the availability of these resources through its web site, and encourages district school clusters and individual schools to apply for school safety and violence prevention grants.

One of the 1999–2000 SVPDP sites, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), is one of only 97 school districts in 34 states to have received a 1999 federally funded Middle School Drug Prevention and School Safety Coordinators Grant ($426,618).[23] The grant is enabling the district to recruit, hire, and train middle school drug prevention and school safety coordinators.[24] The availability of these federal funds and the positive publicity associated with the district's selection to receive the grant have enhanced the first-year implementation of the SVPDP in this district.

The role of the school district in violence prevention programs traditionally has been relatively limited; primarily, the district has maintained a list of programs available for schools to implement and has asked them to choose programs, apply for grants, or obtain additional sources of funding. District-specific factors, however, can significantly expand a district's commitment to alternative violence prevention strategies and enhance the implementation of the SVPDP. For example, the Columbine High School incident in Jefferson County brought in additional resources for staff and programs, while in Brooklyn the receipt of a major federal grant has been an important stimulus. Districts in which such factors are present offer an excellent opportunity for the implementation of

the SVPDP through integration into the regular curriculum, combined with complementary school violence prevention programs.

Parental Involvement

Along with expanded community involvement, increased parental participation in the SVPDP is a factor that offers major potential for enhancing the effectiveness and growth of the program. The SVPDP lends itself to parental involvement; its curricular materials offer many opportunities for SVPDP teachers to introduce parents to the learning that takes place in the classroom, and to involve them in their children's academic activities. For example, during 1999–2000 some parents were involved in judging or observing the SVPDP culminating activities, and they were very impressed with both the SVPDP and their children's participation in that program. Indeed, in some schools, the parents' only involvement in their children's academic activities has been through the SVPDP culminating activities. This is a positive development. Unfortunately, parental involvement in the first-year of the SVPDP has been minimal in all districts, which likely is more an indication of low parental involvement in schools generally than an indication of a lack of interest in the SVPDP.

Table 8.1 shows the limited involvement of parents in the SVPDP classrooms during 1999–2000, as reported by the SVPDP teachers. On a scale of 1, which represents no involvement on the part of parents, to 7, which represents a high level of parental involvement, the average teacher response was 2.0. The first-year SVPDP districts had averages as low as 1.1 (Los Angeles) and as high as 2.7 (Jefferson County). In none of the seven sites, therefore, did the SVPDP teachers report that parental involvement in their classrooms has been significant.

Table 8.1
SVPDP Teachers' Views of Parental Involvement in SVPDP Classrooms

District	Average Response on a Scale of 1 (Not Involved) to 7 (Very Involved)
Brooklyn	2.0
Denver	1.7
Jefferson County	2.7
Los Angeles	1.1
Philadelphia	2.1
Queens	1.6
Wake County	2.5
All Districts	2.0

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

As one SVPDP teacher from Queens noted to the researchers, "The reality is that [parents] are not a part of the system—they are not a part of the public policy group."[25] A teacher in Jefferson County stated that parents are, in general, enthusiastic about the program when she brings it up, "but there's not much follow-through."[26] The SVPDP teachers recognized, however, that the lack of parental involvement in the SVPDP likely

is due to a general lack of parental involvement in curricular activities and to larger, more systemic issues.

At the same time, even though it has been limited during the first year of the SVPDP, parental involvement in the program's culminating activities has been very positive and encouraging. An SVPDP teacher in Jefferson County reported that several of her students' parents are attorneys, and several of them wanted to act as judges for the *We the People* mock congressional hearing.[27] The SVPDP site coordinator in Jefferson County also noted that the parents of the SVPDP students have been very supportive of the program; many of them have told him that they wish there had been similar learning opportunities when they were in school.[28] At the SVPDP culminating activities for Henry Middle School and Skinner Middle School in the Denver Public Schools, parents did attend; however, the researchers saw fewer than five parents.[29] In general, parental participation in the SVPDP culminating activities does not appear to be a catalyst for parental involvement elsewhere in the program. As the Wake County SVPDP site coordinator noted to the researchers, some parents are involved in the culminating activities, but no parents are involved in the daily implementation of the program.[30]

A partial explanation for low parental involvement in the SVPDP implementation may be the lack of information disseminated to parents by the SVPDP site coordinators and teachers. For instance, in Brooklyn, a researcher visited an SVPDP classroom during an open house at one school; no parents with whom she spoke were familiar with the SVPDP or with the curricular materials used in the program.[31] Limited publicity is not always the problem, however. For example, the Denver SVPDP teachers said that they had notified students' parents of their children's participation in the *We the People* culminating activity, and still few parents attended.[32] Nevertheless, parental notification about the program is important to its success, and the SVPDP should emphasize such notification in the implementation of the program in future years.

In Jefferson County, the researchers did encounter one interesting case of parental concern about the SVPDP that they had not seen in any other SVPDP pilot site. The Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator noted that he has received a few complaints from parents who have been irate about the program. In all of these cases, the parents were concerned because they saw the program as an attempt at "social engineering." Their sole objection to the curricular materials and the program itself is its emphasis on tolerance for the beliefs of others. These parents saw this as "code language" for tolerance of homosexuality. In these instances, the site coordinator showed the parents the SVPDP materials and defused the parents' concerns. As far as he knows, the parents have made these kinds of complaints to him rather than to the SVPDP teachers; indeed, none of the teachers to whom the researchers spoke had heard this concern from parents.[33]

Based on the first-year implementation of the SVPDP, the program has the potential to increase significantly the involvement of parents in it. Although an important part of the explanation for limited parental involvement in the SVPDP during its first year relates to the separation of many parents from the schools their children attend, the district SVPDP

participants can take more aggressive steps to inform and involve parents in the program. Greater parental involvement in the SVPDP will, in the long run, strengthen parental (and community) understanding of and support for it.

Community Involvement

Similar to the situation with parents, community involvement in the first-year implementation of the SVPDP has generally been limited across the pilot districts. As table 8.2 shows, on average the SVPDP teachers reported that community members have been involved in SVPDP activities and lessons only slightly more than parents (see table 8.1). The highest level of community involvement was reported by the Wake County SVPDP teachers (4.3), while the lowest was reported by the Queens SVPDP teachers (1.1).

Interestingly, the SVPDP pilot district patterns of parental and community involvement, as reported by the SVPDP teachers, are similar. Table 8.1 shows that the teachers in four districts—Brooklyn, Jefferson County, Philadelphia, and Wake County—indicated a level of parental involvement greater than the overall average reported across all seven districts. As table 8.2 reveals, teachers in the same four districts reported a level of community involvement greater than the overall average reported across all districts. This suggests that similar steps have been taken, and might be taken in the future, to increase both parental and community involvement in the SVPDP.

Table 8.2
SVPDP Teachers' Views of Community Involvement in SVPDP Activities and Lessons

District	Average Response on a Scale of 1 (Not Involved) to 7 (Very Involved)
Brooklyn	2.7
Denver	2.0
Jefferson County	2.7
Los Angeles	1.5
Philadelphia	2.6
Queens	1.1
Wake County	4.3
All Districts	2.4

Source: LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

Although the involvement of community members in the SVPDP activities and lessons certainly can be increased, several first-year SVPDP sites have experienced encouraging developments. For instance, when asked to cite specific examples of community involvement in the SVPDP lessons, the Philadelphia SVPDP teachers mentioned guest speaker presentations by a representative from a drug and anti-violence group, a district attorney, and numerous community leaders.[34] Denver SVPDP teachers have worked to bring community speakers into their classrooms.[35] In Jefferson County, several judges in the community have called the SVPDP site coordinator to inquire about being judges for the *We the People* mock congressional hearings.[36]

In Wake County, SVPDP site coordination is the responsibility of the Center for the Prevention of School Violence (CPSV). The CPSV, a community-based organization with an excellent administration and staff, sends its newsletter, with regular updates about the SVPDP, to a mailing list of over 9,000 people. As a result, the CPSV has received requests from several teachers, administrators, and community leaders in North Carolina for more information about getting involved with the SVPDP in the future.[37] Meanwhile, in Community School District 30 (Queens), Jesse Sligh, Executive Assistant District Attorney, Queens County District Attorney's Office, and several of his attorneys have worked with the SVPDP site coordinator and teachers to implement the program. The active involvement of Sligh and other assistant district attorneys has included their participation in fairy-tale trials, a method of teaching about the judicial system by placing fairy-tale defendants on trial. They also go into schools, where they mentor students and give anti-handgun violence presentations.[38]

Thus, a number of the first-year SVPDP districts have actively involved community members in program implementation. At the same time, community involvement remains an ongoing challenge for the SVPDP. For instance, the Queens SVPDP site coordinator admits that extensive community involvement in the SVPDP will be "very difficult" to achieve in that district.[39] Another perspective was offered to a researcher by Terry Pickeral, Education Commission of the States (ECS), in Denver. Pickeral sees some opportunities for improving the CCE approach to community involvement in the SVPDP. First, the SVPDP teacher training workshops may not be adequately preparing SVPDP teachers to garner community support or deal with potential community objections to the program. When the researcher told him about the Jefferson County SVPDP site coordinator's experiences with parents who saw the program's emphasis on tolerance as code for toleration of homosexuality, Pickeral said, "CCE should be training teachers in how to address this kind of thing before it comes up." He believes that "anticipatory training" of this type is needed to achieve significant community participation in a program like the SVPDP. He also raised the issue of whether the SVPDP should require more extensive community involvement in the program.[40]

In summary, even though the levels of community participation in the first year of the SVPDP, as reported by the program's teachers, generally have been low, several of the pilot sites have successfully involved community members in their activities. At the same time, the SVPDP would benefit from stronger community participation. For example, perhaps the SVPDP teachers could receive training on involving community members more effectively in the SVPDP, or be provided service learning opportunities in the community to enhance their use of the *Project Citizen* culminating activity.

Parental and Community Involvement Outside the SVPDP

Each of the schools visited by the researchers in the seven SVPDP pilot districts had some organization that involved parents and community members in the work of the school. Particular examples include Philadelphia's Home and School Associations, Denver's Collaborative Decision Making groups, or Brooklyn's regular Parent Teacher Associations. Some of the SVPDP schools, like those in Philadelphia, work with

community groups, including local governments, veterans' groups, law students, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, and an anti-violence network.[41] No school officials with whom the researchers visited underestimated the importance of parental and community involvement for successful SVPDP implementation. For example, a Brooklyn administrator pointed out, "Traditionally, the more underachieving a school, the less parental involvement that takes place.[42]" Two SVPDP schools visited by the researchers seemed to be unusually strong in terms of parental and community support and involvement: Sun Valley Middle School in Los Angeles and Henry Middle School in Denver. Even at these schools, however, the participation of parents and community members in the SVPDP classrooms has been limited.

What are the obstacles to greater parental and community involvement in schools in general, and in the SVPDP in particular? A conversation by the researchers with members of different community associations in Denver revealed that personal and economic situations can make it difficult for parents and community members to participate in their community's school. For example, if a single parent has to work at one or two jobs, this does not leave time to do much else.[43] This helps to explain why, in economically stressed areas, parental and community involvement in school programs and activities is lower. In addition, community members with whom the researchers spoke in Denver noted that the generally high level of parental involvement seen at Henry Middle School might be explained by the economic success of the neighborhood. Because many spouses need to work only part-time or not at all, they have more free time to participate in the SVPDP and other activities at their children's schools.[44] The researchers noted similar relationships between parents' personal and economic situations and their participation in school (and SVPDP) activities in other first-year SVPDP pilot sites as well.

Parents of the SVPDP students and community members in the SVPDP districts also shared with the researchers another reason for lack of parental and community involvement. If a child's parents have difficulty speaking English, this might serve as a deterrent to their participation in school activities. They thought that schools should make an effort to bridge the language and cultural barriers that exclude some parents.[45]

Sun Valley Middle School in Los Angeles has established a Parent Center, which has Spanish-language programming, to reach out to the parents of its students. For example, the Parent Center hosts weekly workshops in efforts to increase parental involvement in the classroom. While the Parent Center—with its Spanish programming—has been successful in getting parents to attend its workshops and functions, parental involvement has not automatically spread into the classroom. Several reasons for this are that both parents often work, the stay-at-home parent often has young children to care for at home, and parents face language barriers and feel intimidated in the classrooms.[46]

Additional research and focus groups could help the SVPDP school districts identify and understand the obstacles to greater parental and community involvement in the SVPDP that exist in their districts, and then explore ways to overcome them. Parents who have been involved in the SVPDP have been very impressed with the program, its curricular

materials, and its culminating activities. The CCE and the SVPDP school districts also may find it worthwhile to explore how parents perceive the changes in their children's civic knowledge, civic engagement, and civic dispositions and attitudes resulting from their SVPDP participation, as well as changes in their children's abilities to participate in family discussions and activities. Indeed, the benefits and effects of the SVPDP may first manifest themselves in home environments, where students often are more comfortable expressing themselves.

Positive changes in student attitudes and civic knowledge, participation, and dispositions are the ultimate test of the effectiveness of the SVPDP. Parents may be the first to notice these changes in student behavior; thus, increasing parental involvement in the program so they can support the goals of the program at home could be an important step in enhancing the effectiveness of the SVPDP. In the next phase of the SVPDP, greater efforts should be made to inform parents about the program and to instruct them on how to become more involved in the classroom as well as how to support the principles and lessons of the SVPDP curricular materials at home (e.g., by discussing community and political events with their children).

Conclusions

As this chapter has shown, a number of factors external to the SVPDP and its participating schools can affect the program. School districts, as represented by the SVPDP district contacts and the district social studies coordinators, are important factors in the implementation of the SVPDP. Without the active participation and support of the school districts, the SVPDP will have little impact on student learning and violence prevention in the schools. At the same time, its successful implementation can have a positive impact on school districts. It can demonstrate that civic education curricula-based school violence prevention programs have an important and appropriate place in school district policies and curricula.

School district structures can help or hinder the SVPDP, and implementation of the SVPDP in future years should view these as potential opportunities or difficulties. For example, implementation of the SVPDP will be more successful in districts having organizational infrastructures with goals similar to those of the SVPDP, while such implementation will be less likely to succeed in districts where structures or politics inhibit the integration of supplemental curricula-based programs. Moreover, district policies relating to student behavior provide unique opportunities to make the SVPDP more relevant to both students and teachers, and provide a basis for discussion. The implementation of the SVPDP in a district also may foster the infusion of such curricula-based violence prevention programs into district policies as alternatives to excessive reliance on discipline policies that often are enforced inconsistently.

Greater SVPDP outreach to parents and community members could result in significant improvements in the program. One of the most memorable events of the program for students is the culminating activity, where they often have their first opportunity to present themselves to parents and the community in a setting that emphasizes both

academic achievement and civic engagement. Parental and community involvement through the SVPDP culminating activities benefits both them and the schools by increasing their involvement in the schools, and it also enhances the SVPDP students' confidence and understanding of what is involved in responsible citizenship. More opportunities for parental and community involvement are natural to the SVPDP and should be developed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations suggest steps that could be taken to improve the influence of district, parental, and community involvement on SVPDP implementation.

1. *The CCE and its designated SVPDP site coordinator for each SVPDP district should secure broad and active support from high-ranking district officials for the program prior to the its initial implementation.* Getting the cooperation and active support of these officials is crucial for the program's early success. In the first year of the SVPDP implementation, the CCE and its SVPDP site coordinators in several districts relied heavily on district administrators to gain the approval and participation of the principals and teachers who could help the program thrive. For example, in Jefferson County, without deputy superintendent Cindy Stevenson's support, the SVPDP would not have had the initial push it needed to get off the ground. Officials in other districts can have a similarly positive impact on the program's implementation. It is particularly important that the district social studies coordinator be involved directly and at an early date. The first year of SVPDP implementation has shown that one effective way to gain the support of key district officials is for the SVPDP site coordinator to be an employee of the district. Such a site coordinator is well-placed to use personal relationships with key district officials to benefit the program.

2. *The CCE should choose districts for the SVPDP implementation that have structures and policies that will support it.* Several school district factors can influence the implementation of the SVPDP. School districts having programs and structures already developed that increase involvement from teachers, parents, and community members should provide a good fit for the SVPDP. On the other hand, the CCE should recognize that some district factors (e.g., limited funding, school board politics) can adversely affect SVPDP implementation. In addition to considering the district's *personnel* that will be involved in the program, the CCE should ensure that the district's *structure* will support and enhance it. In addition, the CCE should select districts in which access to the SVPDP classrooms will not be unduly impeded by district policies. It is difficult to assess the SVPDP without observing its classrooms, given that the program's goal is to change students' attitudes and civic knowledge through the use of civic education curricular materials in the classroom. The success of the SVPDP implementation depends on eliminating the district logistical and organizational hurdles that keep the SVPDP teachers from focusing on the program's content.

3. *The CCE should work with district-level SVPDP participants, including the SVPDP site coordinators, teachers, and principals, to identify and implement ways in which greater parent and community involvement could enhance student learning and lessen school violence.* This national "network" of SVPDP participants should, under the leadership of the CCE, identify resources and "best practices" that, in addition to the SVPDP culminating activities, could lead to greater parental and community involvement with SVPDP students' school experiences. This collaboration might produce, for example, an SVPDP packet for students to take home to their parents that included a program description and suggestions for ways the parents could participate in it with their children. In addition, the CCE should work with SVPDP districts to overcome any regional or environmental challenges (e.g., a lack of safe transportation for adults to and from the SVPDP schools) that pose barriers to greater parent and community involvement. Furthermore, students who have completed the SVPDP should be encouraged to continue their civic engagement in their local communities. Service learning activities provide an excellent venue for students to put into action the principles they have learned through the SVPDP curricular materials and culminating activities (e.g., the *Project Citizen* portfolio).

4. *The CCE should develop collaborative arrangements with key national civic organizations to provide a framework for greater community involvement in the SVPDP districts.* The CCE should develop involvement opportunities with national organizations that complement the mission of the SVPDP, including such groups as the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Fraternal Order of Police, law-related education groups, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the American Legion, and Kiwanis. In addition, the CCE, working through its state coordinator and congressional district coordinator networks, should encourage SVPDP district collaboration with state and local governments, business, and nonprofit and community violence prevention and civic education organizations. This should be part of a systemic effort through which the SVPDP schools gain support for their activities in the larger community. The support and active involvement of community organizations is essential to ensure that the lessons of the SVPDP reach beyond the classroom and are reinforced in the larger community. Ultimately, the SVPDP's long-term success depends on the active involvement and support of these groups, which are committed to working collaboratively to reach the goals they share with the SVPDP.

Notes

[1] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Neil Deason, Secondary Social Studies Specialist, Curriculum and Instruction, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[2] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado, November 1, 1999.

[3] Interview by Susan Kolar and Renée Nogales with Melvin Garrison, District Social Studies Coordinator, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 12, 1999.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Brian Loney, Project Coordinator for the Social Studies Curriculum Resource Staff and SVPDP Site Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Arna Caplan, Elementary School Curriculum Writer—Intermediate, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Cindy Stout, Middle School Curriculum Writer, Jefferson County Public Schools; at Jefferson County Public Schools District Office, Golden, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[8] Interview by Susan Vermeer with Cindy Stevenson, Deputy Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, Colorado, March 1, 2000.

[9] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, November 11, 1999.

[10] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack with Nicole Williams, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 29, 1999.

[11] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Pam Van Dyk, SVPDP Site Evaluator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 12, 1999.

[12] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Betsy Thompson, District Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; Mary Atwater, Violence Prevention Coordinator, Jefferson County Public Schools; and Ruth Schnidt, Community Volunteer, Jefferson County Public Schools; at Jefferson County Public Schools Safe and Drug Free Schools Office, Lakewood, Colorado, February 28, 2000.

[13] School District of Philadelphia, *Student and Family Handbook for the School Year 1999–2000* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1999), p. 13.

[14] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 13, 1999.

[15] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, February 19, 2000.

[16] Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles, California. Online. Available: http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/Office_of_Communications/this-2htm. Accessed: October 11, 1999.

[17] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Debra Lesser, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 29, 2000.

[18] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[19] Interview by Benjamin Crawford and Kris Mack with Pam Riley, Director, Center for the Prevention of School Violence, Raleigh, North Carolina, November 11, 1999.

[20] Thompson, Atwater, and Schnidt interview.

[21] Ibid.

[22] California Department of Education, Sacramento, California. Online. Available: http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/safety. Accessed: March 10, 2000.

[23] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga and Samantha Wallack with Rebecca Skinner, Director of Program Development and SVPDP District Contact, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, November 19, 1999.

[24] U.S. Department of Education, "Riley Announces $34.6 Million in Grants to Train Drug and Safety Coordinators in Middle Schools," Washington, D.C. Online. Available: http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/09-1999/coord.html. Accessed: October 1, 1999.

[25] Statements at SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Community School District 30 (Queens), New York, New York, January 29, 2000.

[26] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with SVPDP Teacher, Eiber Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Lakewood, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[27] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with an SVPDP Teacher, Lukas Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Westminster, Colorado, December 7, 1999.

[28] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[29] Observations by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda at SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[30] Interview by Kris Mack and Emily Roth with Carleen Wray, SVPDP Site Coordinator, Wake County Public School System, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 22, 2000.

[31] Statements by Parents of SVPDP Students, Open School Night, I.S. 55K, Oceanhill-Brownsville Secondary School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 16, 2000.

[32] Statements at SVPDP *We the People* Culminating Activity, Denver Public Schools, held at Trinity United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, February 15, 2000.

[33] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[34] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

[35] SVPDP Teacher Training Workshop, Denver Public Schools, November 1, 1999.

[36] Loney, Caplan, and Stout interview.

[37] Wray interview.

[38] Interview by Jeffrey Goveia and Eva Stahl with Jesse Sligh, Executive Assistant District Attorney, Office of the District Attorney, Queens County, New York, New York, February 1, 2000.

[39] Lesser interview, November 11, 1999.

[40] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with Terry Pickeral, Project Coordinator, Compact for Learning and Citizenship, Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado, December 9, 1999.

[41] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000.

[42] Interview by Concetta Bencivenga, Angela Hernandez, and Samantha Wallack with Kathleen Cashin, Superintendent, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 14, 2000.

[43] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Francis Frain, President, Sunnyside Neighborhood Association, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[44] Interview by Wesley Wilson and Susan Woda with Parents of SVPDP Students, Bear Valley Neighborhood Association, Denver, Colorado, February 16, 2000.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Interview by Tinh Nguyen and Delia Perez with Manuel Diaz, Assistant Principal, Sun Valley Middle School, Los Angeles Unified School District, Sun Valley, California, February 23, 2000.

The SVPDP in Action: Wake County Public School System

SVPDP Students Make the Connection between Coursework and "Real Life"

During a Wake County Public School System SVPDP class discussion on *Project Citizen*, the researchers witnessed the effects of the SVPDP curricular materials on students' attitudes. In previous class sessions, the students had divided into groups and researched potential *Project Citizen* portfolio topics, including the environment, transportation, and homelessness. In the class session that the researchers observed, the students presented their findings on each topic, summarizing their research. Though a variety of issues were discussed, no one issue emerged that seemed sufficiently important or interesting to the students to pursue as a classwide project; indeed, the students seemed somewhat disinterested in the proposed topics.

Among the issues debated was the concept of student empowerment. Initially, students showed a lack of enthusiasm for this topic; but then one student dissented, saying that student empowerment was an important issue for the class to discuss and to study. He spoke about the connection between what the class had learned about the rights and the responsibilities of the citizens in a democracy and the rights of the students within a school setting. The rest of the class responded actively to his point, and a lively discussion ensued, focusing on the students' desire to have their views heard and to play a role in the administration of the school. One student emphatically stated, "this is preparation for life. There are always going to be situations where your voice is not heard, and you need to discuss the problems, not just accept them."

Chapter 9. New Directions in School Violence Prevention

April 19, 2000, marked the fifth anniversary of the taking of 168 lives in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. On the following day, in Colorado, survivors of the Columbine High School tragedy gathered to mourn the tragic loss of students and a teacher in 1999. These reunions and wakes are more common now, and are at the center of public attention and debate. While violent incidents in the United States have declined overall, including in schools and on school campuses, communities across the country are demanding change in society and in their schools to prevent further violence. Tragedies like those in Oklahoma and Colorado will not be forgotten, if only because they have shed light on an American culture that glorifies violence. More important, these incidents have spurred American citizens to explore new ways to deter violence in our schools.

In response to the discourse surrounding school violence, President Clinton, in a radio address to the nation in spring 2000, affirmed the need for more violence prevention programs for our youth.[1] Beyond the battle over guns and gun laws, the President focused on the school campus and the need to reach out to students and reinforce democratic values. While his address was timely and important, the President did not mention school curricula or classroom efforts as worthwhile approaches to school violence prevention. The one place where students spend the majority of their youth is all too often ignored as a medium for violence prevention.

There are school violence prevention advocates, however, who support the use of curricular materials as the best means to reach youth. A unique program that uses civic education curricula to achieve safe schools and campuses is the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP), administered by the Center for Civic Education (CCE). The SVPDP is an effort to instill democratic values and critical thinking skills in students, and to teach them how to use those skills in solving everyday conflicts and preventing antisocial behavior and violence.

Throughout the 1999–2000 school year, the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs has documented and assessed the implementation of this unique and exciting program that emphasizes violence prevention through the infusion of civics concepts and content in upper elementary and middle school social studies curricula. This report on the results of the LBJ School project seeks to inform the CCE and SVPDP participants about the program's first-year implementation, and to provide a foundation for expanding it to more classrooms and districts around the country.

States and schools often have overlooked the fact that civic education plays an important role in their standards and curricula, as detailed, for example, in the LBJ School's 1999 report titled *The Civic Education of American Youth: From State Policies to School District Practices*.[2] LBJ School civic education projects consistently have found, however, that the very content of civic education challenges students to think in new and critical ways. The goal of civic education is to aid students in developing the core

competencies needed to participate in a democratic society. These competencies include critical thinking, evaluative, knowledge, and participatory skills—to name a few. Beyond acquiring these skills, students gain a respect for the value of civic engagement and its power in shaping both their own communities and, in the larger picture, the country as a whole.

In turn, these are many of the same skills promoted by violence prevention initiatives for students. Whether it is conflict resolution, character education, anger management, peer mediation, or success tracks, these programs attempt to tap into the core competencies of civic education. By strengthening the skills that research has shown to be part of successful violence prevention programs, linking civic education and violence prevention programs promises to be an extremely valuable approach for educators. In this way, teachers can bring democracy into the classroom while advancing violence prevention issues in a credible way. For students, viewing violence prevention issues through the lens of civic education connects them to their own role and power in society; they are empowered by their ability to discern right and wrong by applying their civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Curriculum-based violence prevention innovatively supports in two important and vital initiatives: civic engagement and violence prevention. By moving these messages inside the classrooms, teachers and communities make it clear to students that democracy and nonviolence are so important that they must be part of the school curriculum. In this way, the SVPDP creates a foundation for a new approach to violence prevention through its infusion of civic education curricular materials into regular school courses.

As the nation faces the increased visibility of violence in our society and schools, the SVPDP offers an opportunity to revitalize civic participation and reduce violence in schools and among youth. Curriculum-based solutions reach students directly and, in the case of the SVPDP, simultaneously introduce them to the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed to be responsible citizens while promoting democratic solutions over violent ones.

This chapter addresses the revitalization of citizen participation and its importance to civic education instruction and school violence prevention; examines curriculum–based approaches to violence prevention; and suggests steps that could provide a stronger framework for educating students for responsible citizenship in violence-free schools.

Revitalizing Citizen Participation

> *The death of democracy is not likely to be an assassination from ambush. It will be a slow extinction from apathy, indifference, and undernourishment.*[3]
>
> –Robert Hutchins

Since 1998, several reports have been issued regarding the civic engagement of America's youth. The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia revealed in its survey of 600 teens that only two percent knew the names of the U.S. Supreme Court justices

and only 35 percent knew the first three words ("We the People...") of the U.S. Constitution. In a 1999 study of randomly sampled 15- to 24-year-olds, the National Association of Secretaries of State found that 94 percent strongly agreed with the statement, "Government is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, not for the benefit of all."[4] In late 1999, the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, released the results of the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) national civic education assessment. These results revealed that students have a poor understanding of the concepts of government and democracy; indeed, only four percent of the students assessed displayed a mastery of knowledge about civics and government.[5]

These studies, while focused on students' knowledge of government and democratic institutions, serve as a national compass, showing that our nation needs to revitalize citizen participation, civic knowledge, and civic dispositions. Educators and policymakers are promoting national campaigns for increased civics literacy, and schools are becoming focal points to produce more informed and responsible citizens.

The National Alliance for Civic Education (NACE) is a new coalition, formed in May 2000, that focuses on schools and education as stimuli for change. It is a national effort to bring together individuals and groups who are committed to furthering the cause of civic education. According to the NACE, "There is persuasive evidence that rigorous and multifaceted civic education in schools, primary and secondary, can improve students' knowledge, and that this knowledge promotes civic beliefs, civic character, and civic involvement. There is also evidence that other key programs and practices—such as a democratic school climate, ...student contact with public officials, and school and community-based service learning—can boost civic knowledge and skills."[6]

In an effort to publicize and promote the inclusion of civic education in schools and communities at large, the NACE has formulated several goals to guide its activities:

1. "to raise the amount, quality, and visibility of civic education in the school curriculum";

2. "to dramatically increase high-quality preservice and in-service training opportunities for teachers involved in civic education";

3. "to provide teachers with improved access to reliable information on curricula, texts, materials, and pedagogical practices that effectively engage students in civic learning";

4. "to intensify community support for civic education initiatives, including parents, youth organizations, community groups, and the media";

5. "to mobilize institutions of higher education on behalf of civic education, especially the training of teachers involved in civic education";

6. "to encourage every state to include rigorous programs of civic education in schools and to systematically assess their effectiveness"; and

7. "to encourage the federal government to administer the NAEP Civics Assessment more frequently and with state-level results to make it more useful for improving state and local civic education programs."[7]

These goals reflect the need for the revitalization of civic education in our schools. They also recognize that the most important influences on increased student civic engagement are teachers in the classroom teaching civics, integrating democratic principles into existing curricula, and helping students learn the core competencies of civic education that are vital to problem solving and conflict resolution.

Sustained and systemic attention to civic education in kindergarten through grade 12 must be a national priority if the United States is to reverse the current patterns of civic illiteracy and declining civic participation. The push for citizen revitalization should not be confined, however, to civic awareness and participation; rather, it should encompass all of the life skills and other competencies that help us build trust in our civic life, including teamwork, respect and tolerance for others, and the importance of responsible conflict resolution. This requires that we nourish student awareness and understanding of the democratic principles and the supporting institutions, especially schools, that foster civic education and violence prevention.

The Center for Civic Education (CCE) has campaigned for civic renewal on the foundation of promoting civic core competencies as vital to healthy, productive, and nonviolent lives for American's youth. The CCE's campaign seeks to strengthen instruction in civics and government and to reaffirm the traditional civic mission of the schools by promoting the establishment of curricular requirements and instruction in accord with the following principles:

1. "Education in civics and government is a central purpose of education, essential to the well-being of American democracy";

2. "Civics and government is a subject on a level with other subjects and, like history and geography, is an integrative and interdisciplinary subject";

3. "Civics and government should be taught explicitly and systematically to all students, kindergarten through twelfth grade, whether as separate units or as a part of other subjects"; and

4. "Effective instruction in civics and government requires attention to the content of the discipline as well as the skills, principles, and values required for full participation in and reasoned commitment to our democratic system."[8]

Of critical importance to the CCE's campaign is its focus on civic education curricula and instruction. Teacher expertise and instructional approaches are among the most important factors in fostering students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. A

learning environment and instructional framework must exist in the classroom that provides students with an understanding of democratic processes, principles, and institutions so they can live their daily lives in ways that reinforce respect for authority, social interaction, and tolerance toward the ideas of others.

The CCE's implementation of the SVPDP is consistent with its national campaign to enhance civic education through curricular materials, teacher training, and community engagement. Through the SVPDP, the CCE affirms its commitment to civic renewal. It also promotes the use of civic education curricular materials to shape students' understanding and application of democratic principles and, thus, to reduce students' antisocial behavior and violence in our schools.

Curriculum-Based Approaches to School Violence Prevention

> *In a neighborhood dispute there may be stunts, rough words, and even hot insults; but when a whole people speaks to its government, the dialogue and the action must be on a level reflecting the worth of that people and the responsibility of that government.*[9]
>
> –Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis, James Farmer et al.

There is a paradox within America's schools today. Despite research indicating that incidents of school violence and in-school weapon violations have dropped, students, teachers, and administrators feel less safe within their schools and more worried about antisocial student behavior and violence. As *Time* magazine reported in its April 24, 2000, issue, "On average, [school] may be a safer place than ever—the number of school-associated violent deaths dropped 40% from 1997 through 1999—but it feels scarier with each new well-publicized shooting and threat."[10] The tragedies of Jonesboro, Arkansas; Conyers, Georgia; West Paducah, Kentucky; Pearl, Mississippi; Springfield, Oregon; Edinboro, Pennsylvania; and, perhaps most striking, Littleton, Colorado, are grim reminders that, despite the reduction of crime and violence within schools, a strong sense of fear is not unwarranted.

Numerous approaches to school violence prevention have been proposed and implemented by American schools, educators, and policymakers. As noted in chapter 1, these include approaches that change a school's physical environment (e.g., metal detectors) or social environment (e.g., after-school sports programs); approaches that advocate school management initiatives (e.g., discipline codes, partnerships with local police departments); and approaches that provide extracurricular educational programs for students (e.g., peer mediation, character education, and conflict resolution programs). Most of these occur outside the classroom, however. Moreover, whether they lessen school violence and the antisocial student behavior that can lead to serious physical violence is, in most cases, unknown, if not questionable.[11]

Curriculum-based program approaches to prevent school violence are not entirely novel. From law-related education programs to anger and management curricula used in the

classroom, curriculum-based approaches are already being implemented. In general, however, even though these programs are used within the classroom, they often focus thematically on violence and its control. Violence-related issues are the starting point for classroom discussions rather than considerations that emerge naturally from the instructional lessons in the classroom.

These violence-focused programs do have merits; for example, their focus on reaching students, their influence on students' views about violence, and their attention to conflict resolution all are commendable. Yet, the criticism of many of these programs is twofold: extracurricular and add-on programs have been unable to change student behavior and attitudes long-term, and many curriculum-based violence prevention programs have an overly narrow focus.

The SVPDP is an example of a new direction in violence prevention education. Through civic education that fosters and revitalizes civic participation, respect, tolerance, and interest in democracy, the SVPDP develops student skills that may directly reduce antisocial behavior and violence among youth, and promotes students' understanding of and appreciation for democracy, the role of government, and individual rights. The program's curricular materials include civics concepts and content encompassing history, democratic concepts, and service learning, integrated within a democratic approach to teaching that uses teamwork, group work, role-play, writing, and student presentations to create a classroom environment respectful of all its members. This unique approach to violence prevention deserves attention and further research.

Beyond building for students the foundation of greater civic awareness that produces more responsible and engaged citizens, the program's curriculum-based approach also benefits teachers. This approach does not simply infuse civics into the regular class curriculum; through teacher training workshops and supplemental curricular materials, it prepares teachers to be participants and leaders of the process. Through the SVPDP's extensive in-service professional development, an opportunity that many teachers lack, teachers become better able to foster classroom sharing, group learning, and service—all elements of a cooperative, democratic, and nonviolent society. Curriculum-based education, supported by effective teacher training workshops enables teachers to learn teaching techniques for providing classroom learning environments that reinforce the curricular content and, thereby lessen the likelihood of antisocial or violent student behavior.

Teacher training workshops at each SVPDP district site make it possible for the program to foster a team atmosphere among teachers while tailoring the SVPDP curricular materials and their infusion to the district's curricular requirements. Although several SVPDP teachers during the first year of the program have at times appeared overwhelmed by the amount of material in the SVPDP, teacher professional development opportunities have eased the integration of the SVPDP materials into school curricula and calmed teacher anxiety over program implementation. For example, in Los Angeles, the SVPDP teachers initially felt overly burdened by having to complete a culminating activity recommended by the CCE, and refused to consider using the activity. Following

a discussion of the activity and a "how to" session at a Los Angeles teacher training workshop, the teachers quickly gained the comfort level needed to conduct the activity. In Community School District 30 (Queens), in New York City, the SVPDP teachers bonded through sharing their stories, challenges, and bureaucratic hurdles. They labeled themselves the "Queens Team," and found that the experience of participating in the SVPDP has given them access to administrative and curricular support within their own district that they had never had before. Such encouragement and mutual support among a district's SVPDP participants is an important element of the program, setting it apart from other curriculum-based violence prevention programs.

Early successes of the SVPDP's curriculum-based approach to violence prevention through civic education are apparent even after only one year of implementation. The civics concepts and content of the material are the crux of the program and, as this preliminary assessment of the SVPDP implementation indicates, are producing positive student behavior and attitudes. As one SVPDP student testified, "I used to be bored when my parents watched the news on the TV, but now I like it because I know what they're talking about. My dad and I talk about politics all the time now." Another student said that he now feels free to "jump right in" when adults talk about politics. A female SVPDP student believes that her participation in the program has made it more likely that she will vote when she is older: "I didn't think it was that big a deal before, but now I do." Yet another girl said that she now feels like she has to vote because, as she explains, "other people died so that I could."[12]

The impact the SVPDP has had on students goes beyond voting and civic involvement, however. In Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), when SVPDP students discussed their impressions of the program with the researchers, one student explained how the class discussions have reinforced her open-mindedness and tolerance. She asserted that, as an immigrant, she often feels that "Americans" belittle her; but now she understands that she has the rights and liberties of a citizen, too. Her classmate agreed: "This class has taught me to be more open-minded, not to be prejudiced—and that prejudice is wrong."[13] In Philadelphia, the researchers observed SVPDP students begin a class by reciting a memorized pledge to nonviolence. Indeed, comments in all seven SVPDP districts have made it clear that civic education concepts that go beyond just voting, such as tolerance and nonviolence, are reaching—and being understood by—students who have participated in the first year of the SVPDP.

SVPDP testimonials such as those above, as well as the program elements that have produced them, are worthy of additional attention and research. Understanding how a government serves citizens and directly affects communities is a lifetime learning process, and appreciating democracy and influencing public laws and programs—even on the local level—can forever shape the civic dispositions, knowledge, and skills of all who take part in the process. Civic education, especially when joined with informed civic engagement, a component of the SVPDP, offers positive and hopeful results for students caught in the whirlwind of declining civic engagement and increasing peer apathy and antisocial behavior.

Violence prevention is a potentially powerful outcome of increased civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In Community School District 30 (Queens), for example, some SVPDP teachers commented on the connections they see between teaching and learning civics and a reduction in school violence. One teacher remarked, "The goals of the SVPDP are to prepare teachers to teach students [civics] concepts and [help them] gain a [greater understanding] of the Constitution so they can become better citizens and prevent violence...."[14] Another teacher asserted that, for her, the purpose of the SVPDP is "to demonstrate the premise that it is more efficacious to prevent violence before it occurs as opposed to intervening afterward; to inform students of the basics of our democratic/justice system in order to make a *connection* between their study of American government and the necessity of rules, respect for rights, etc."[15] These lofty, but deeply felt, goals asserted by SVPDP teachers—the true leaders of the implementation of the SVPDP—reveal their determination to help their students make this "connection." Such statements also reveal the incredible potential for civic education curriculum-based approaches to school violence.

Educating Students for Citizenship in Violence-Free Schools

> *If young people feel no connection to anything, their dislocation is a measure of our failure, not theirs.*[16]
>
> –Christopher Lasch

While the whole country recognizes the need for more effective school violence prevention, inside the classroom the SVPDP has begun to address violence prevention through the infusion of civic education curricular materials. This curriculum-based program, designed and implemented by the CCE, has produced promising results in its first year. The SVPDP's innovative approach links civic awareness to violence prevention, advocates and encompasses all of the skills and attitudes nurtured by other violence prevention programs, and fosters in students the competencies that will allow them to be informed and contributing citizens in a democratic society.

The CCE, the NACE, and other civic education organizations that emphasize the importance of curriculum-based initiatives to produce informed and engaged citizens have created a measure of heightened awareness nationally about the role and importance of civic education in schools. Specifically, the CCE's curriculum initiatives, coupled with its campaign to encourage states to reform their civic education standards and policy requirements, represent a two-pronged effort to achieve civic literacy among youth. Now the CCE has expanded its efforts, seeking through the SVPDP to achieve civic literacy while addressing students' antisocial behavior and violence in schools.

The SVPDP is a first building block toward creating a stronger foundation for active and informed civic engagement. It is an example of a new direction for violence prevention education. Skills that are advanced through civic education may directly reduce violence among youth. In addition, students gain a fuller understanding of democracy, government, and individual rights. Through the SVPDP, teachers and administrators are able to foster classroom atmospheres conducive to sharing, group learning, and service—

all elements of a cooperative, democratic, nonviolent environment. In sum, curriculum-based civic education, grounded on strong professional development and community outreach, enables students to grasp the core civic competencies (e.g., critical thinking skills, evaluative skills, knowledge skills, and participatory skills). In addition, students gain a respect for the value of civic engagement and its power in shaping their own communities, deterring violence, and preventing victimization.

Through democratic awareness and a fuller understanding of what it means to be a citizen, students—from an early age—learn through civic education curricular materials the skills needed to promulgate their views in a democratic society without violence. These skills may then be transferable to everyday life in confronting a problem or a disagreement. Students have a first-hand opportunity to learn that civic engagement and democratic resolution are the only acceptable avenues for dealing with conflict. Only through a greater understanding and appreciation of democratic values can a more just and peaceful society evolve.

Clearly, then, the SVPDP is critically important in educating students for informed and engaged citizenship in violence-free school and classroom environments. But additional steps should be taken to enhance the use and effectiveness of the SVPDP and other civic education curricular approaches to school violence prevention. The CCE, working in partnership with its state and local networks and with other civic education and school violence prevention groups committed to the use of such approaches, should take the lead in promoting and carrying out key action steps to generate even more effective implementation of the SVPDP and related programs. The following are three steps that could provide an initial stimulus for such enhanced and expanded implementation.

Action Steps

The CCE, in partnership with the civic education and school violence prevention communities, should promote a national effort to conduct and disseminate research on the effectiveness of curricular approaches that integrate civic education and engagement and school violence prevention. As with other education programs and projects of this type, the effectiveness of the SVPDP and its outcomes must be assessed systematically. While research with regard to the effectiveness of civic education curricular materials in violence prevention is scarce, the 1999–2000 successes of the SVPDP strongly suggest a positive correlation between civic education and engagement and nonviolence among youth. This and other findings from the first-year implementation of the SVPDP provide a stimulus for promoting, designing, conducting, and disseminating research to explore this relationship more comprehensively. Moreover, it is critically important that research about what works in civic education and violence prevention curriculum-based approaches be shared widely, both among SVPDP participants and throughout the education community. More attention also must be given to examining whether the formation of long-term, positive civic dispositions among students is linked to reduced antisocial behavior and violence in schools and communities.

The CCE, in partnership with the civic education and school violence prevention communities, should promote a national conference and state dialogues on the

effectiveness of curriculum-based approaches to violence prevention that use civic education curricular materials. The CCE and its partner organizations and networks should convene a national conference to disseminate "best practices" and "program successes" resulting from such approaches, including the SVPDP, and to identify opportunities and challenges for expanding and improving such approaches. Participants should include program directors and other participants (e.g., teachers and school administrators), as well as national and state education policymakers. In addition, state-level dialogues could be linked to current civic education campaigns and coalitions to foster a redirection of school violence prevention programs to include greater use of civic education curricular materials in the classroom. Education policymakers, educators, parents and students, media, and community leaders would benefit from such a national conference and state dialogues that would increase their understanding of and appreciation for the use of civic education in schools to lessen students' antisocial and violent behavior. In this way, the civic education curricular materials might nurture informed and responsible citizenship, not only within classrooms and schools but also in families and communities.

The CCE, in partnership with the civic education and school violence prevention communities, should establish collaborations and networks among state K-12 education systems, national educator associations, teacher training institutions, community-based groups, and other organizations that reinforce and build on the research and dialogue steps recommended above. An effective and successful systemic approach to violence prevention and civic engagement involves many persons in addition to teachers, students, and school administrators. Numerous types of collaborations are possible for strengthening the integration of civic education curricular materials into school curricula in order to prevent school violence. For example, in-school and extracurricular collaborations between such programs as the SVPDP and existing violence prevention programs increase the opportunities both to reach students and establish a consistent message to them across diverse school programs and activities. These school-level and district-level collaborations can be enhanced by the participation of national associations and state groups, as well as parents, community organizations, and other non-profit cooperatives. As another example, increased communication and relationship-building between educators and health and human services agencies can reinforce civic education-based violence prevention messages in the schools, and respond to students' needs when emotional or behavioral problems have the potential to negate curricular content and concepts. Collaborations that highlight the importance of service learning and civic engagement are particularly important. For example, increased attention should be given to the expanded use of such programs and activities as the SVPDP's Project Citizen. When students personally experience the process of initiating change within a democracy, they gain a greater tolerance for and understanding of prosocial and antiviolent approaches to conflict resolution. In these ways, collaborations and networks create the framework for more effective and comprehensive long-term implementation of the SVPDP and related programs, as well as for more informed and responsible citizens.

Notes

[1] "Radio Address by the President to the Nation," Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, Washington, D.C., April 15, 2000 (press release). Online. Available: http://www.pub.whitehouse.gov/retrieve-documents.html. Accessed: June 23, 2000.

[2] Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin, *The Civic Education of American Youth: From State Policies to School District Practices*, Policy Research Project Report No. 133 (Austin, Texas, 1999).

[3] Pitts, Anne Boyd, "Regenerating a Civil Society in Florida," *The Florida Bar Journal* (January 2000), p. 26.

[4] Ibid.

[5] National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, *The Nation's Report Card: Focus on Civics*. Online. Available: http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/civics/civics.asp. Accessed: June 19, 2000.

[6] William Galston et al., "Declaration of the National Alliance for Civic Education" (College Park, Maryland, March 17, 2000), p. 1.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Center for Civic Education, "National Campaign Announced," *Center Correspondent*, vol. 12, no.1 (Winter 2000), pp. 1, 4.

[9] Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis, James Farmer et al., "Purpose for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom" (Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963).

[10] Morse, Jodie, "Looking For Trouble: More and More Schools Are Trying to Spot the Potential Killers in Their Midst. But What about the Innocents?" *Time* (April 24, 2000). Online. Available: http://www.time.com/time/magazine/articles/0,3266,43162,00.html. Accessed: May 5, 2000.

[11] Alexander Volokh with Lisa Snell, *School Violence Prevention: Strategies to Keep School Safe*, Policy Study No. 234L (Los Angeles, California: Reason Public Policy Institute, January 1998). Online. Available: http://www.rppi.org/ps234.html. Accessed: April 25, 2000.

[12] Interview by Elizabeth Ann Witt with SVPDP Students, Prospect Valley Elementary School, Jefferson County Public Schools, Wheat Ridge, Colorado, December 8, 1999.

[13] SVPDP Classroom observations by Concetta Bencivenga, Angela Hernandez, and Samantha Wallack, I.S. 275K, Thelma J. Hamilton School, Community School District 23 (Brooklyn), New York, New York, February 14, 2000.

[14] LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Goodman, Stephen, "The Power of Listening: Could Civic Participation Do as Much as Metal Detectors to Safeguard Our Young People?" in *Education Week* (December 1, 1999), p. 15.

Appendix A. LBJ School Violence Prevention Program Questionnaire for CS4 Members, January 2000

Please fax the completed survey, or return it in the enclosed, postage paid envelope, to

Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
P.O. Box Y
Austin, TX 78713-8925
tolo@mail.utexas.edu
Phone: 512/471-3270 Fax: 512/471-1835

Please return by January 20, 2000

Violence Prevention Program Questionnaire
For CS4 Members

Name:_____

Title:_____

Work Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone:_____ FAX:_____

Email:_____

Date Completed:_____

The Center for Civic Education (Calabasas, CA) is currently conducting a School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP) in seven school districts in the United States. The SVPDP uses a ***school-based civic education curriculum*** to change student attitudes about school violence. CCE uses the term "civic education," to describe programs designed to promote 1) the civic dispositions and commitments to fundamental values and principles required for competent and responsible citizenship; 2) the participatory skills necessary to solve neighborhood and community problems; and 3) the knowledge and intellectual skills required to monitor and influence public policy.

A research team from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin is conducting a study of the planning and implementation of the SVPDP. We are compiling information on programs similar to the SVPDP that approach violence prevention through the medium of civic education. ***We are seeking information from you about such programs that may be in use in your state.***

Please complete the following questionnaire, and return it, either by fax, in the enclosed envelope, or via email by January 20, 2000. Thank you for your assistance.

1. Are there any curriculum-based civic education programs currently in use in your state that address school violence prevention?

_____yes _____no _____don't know

If the answer is yes, please go on to question 2. Otherwise, please move to question 3.

2. Please provide all the following information you can about programs in use in your state. If you need additional templates, please copy extras.

Name of program_____

Is this a national program or unique to your state?_____

Check any of the civic education topics listed below that the program covers.

_____ Civic knowledge and intellectual skills _____ Civic dispositions

_____ Civic participation skills

Check any of the violence prevention topics listed below that the program covers.

_____anger management _____peer mediation

_____conflict resolution _____peer pressure

_____gangs _____bullying

_____dating violence _____tolerance/prejudice

_____character education _____stress management

_____other _____

Circle the grade levels at which the program is aimed.

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Is the program aimed at _____all students

_____students identified as at-risk for violent behavior

As part of what course(s) is the program taught?

_____social studies _____government

_____civics _____history

_____other _____

Number of districts in the state using the program_____

How long has the program been used in the state?_____

Please provide comments on the program (use an additional sheet if necessary)._____

_____

_____

_____

Contact information for agency or organization that developed the program:

Name of agency_____

Address_____

_____

_____

Telephone_____

Fax_____

Email_____

Website_____

Name of program_____

Is this a national program or unique to your state?_____

Check any of the civic education topics listed below that the program covers.

_____ Civic knowledge and intellectual skills _____ Civic dispositions

_____ Civic participation skills

Check any of the violence prevention topics listed below that the program covers.

_____anger management _____peer mediation

_____conflict resolution _____peer pressure

_____gangs _____bullying

_____dating violence _____tolerance/prejudice

_____character education _____stress management

_____other _____

Circle the grade levels at which the program is aimed.

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Is the program aimed at _____all students

_____students identified as at-risk for violent behavior

As part of what course(s) is the program taught?

_____social studies _____government

_____civics _____history

_____other _____

Number of districts in the state using the program_____

How long has the program been used in the state?_____

Please provide comments on the program (use an additional sheet if necessary)._____

_____

_____

Contact information for agency or organization that developed the program:

Name of agency_____

Address_____

_____

_____

Telephone_____

Fax_____

Email_____

Website_____

3. Do you know of any curriculum-based civic education programs not currently in use in your state that address school violence prevention?

_____yes _____no _____don't know

If the answer is yes, please go on to question 4. Otherwise, you're done!

4. Please provide all the following information you can about programs not in use in your state. If you need additional templates, please copy extras.

Name of program_____

Check any of the civic education topics listed below that the program covers.

_____ Civic knowledge and intellectual skills _____ Civic dispositions

_____ Civic participation skills

Check any of the violence prevention topics listed below that the program covers.

_____anger management _____peer mediation

_____conflict resolution _____peer pressure

_____gangs _____bullying

_____dating violence _____tolerance/prejudice

_____character education _____stress management

_____other _____

Circle the grade levels at which the program is aimed.

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Is the program aimed at _____all students

_____students identified as at risk for violent behavior

As part of what course(s) is the program taught?

_____social studies _____government

_____civics _____history

_____other _____

Please provide comments on the program (use an additional sheet if necessary)._____

_____

_____

_____

Contact information for agency or organization that developed the program:

Name of agency_____

Address_____

_____

_____

Telephone_____

Fax_____

Email_____

Website_____

Name of program_____

Check any of the civic education topics listed below that the program covers.

_____ Civic knowledge and intellectual skills _____ Civic dispositions

_____ Civic participation skills

Check any of the violence prevention topics listed below that the program covers.

_____anger management _____peer mediation

_____conflict resolution _____peer pressure

_____gangs _____bullying

_____dating violence _____tolerance/prejudice

_____character education _____stress management

_____other _____

Circle the grade levels at which the program is aimed.

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Is the program aimed at _____all students

_____students identified as at risk for violent behavior

As part of what course(s) is the program taught?

_____social studies _____government

_____civics _____history

_____other _____

Please provide comments on the program (use an additional sheet if necessary)._____

_____

_____

_____

Contact information for agency or organization that developed the program:

Name of agency_____

Address_____

_____

_____

Telephone_____

Fax_____

Email_____

Website_____

Appendix B. LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, November 1999

Please give the completed questionnaire to the researcher from the LBJ School or fax it to the number below or ask for a postage-paid envelope to send it to:

Dr. Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Drawer Y
Austin, Texas 78713-8925
Phone: 512/471-3270 FAX: 512/471-1835

School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program
Questionnaire For Teachers

Name: _____

Work Address: _____

City: _____ State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

School District: _____

Date: _____

Please answer the following questions, providing us general background information and your perceptions of the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP). Feel free to attach additional comments on a separate sheet of paper for any question or item that may require a more elaborate answer.

General Background

1. How many years have you been teaching in the classroom?

   1-2 3-4 5-9 10-14 15+

2. What degree(s) have you earned? Please circle all that apply.

   Associate Baccalaureate Master Ph.D. Other _____

3. What was your primary subject(s) of study (i.e. major, focus, concentration, etc.)?

   _____

4. What subject(s) do you currently teach?

_____

5. In what subject area(s) are you currently certified to teach? (Please circle all those that apply)

Social Studies History Government/Political Science Geography

Economics Psychology/Sociology Other_____

6. Does your professional/academic background include civic courses, civic participation, civic education, etc.?

Yes No

If yes, please describe your background and/or experience.

_____

_____

School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program

7. Is this the first time you've ever worked with the Center for Civic Education's (CCE) materials/programs?

Yes No

If no, please describe your previous association with the Center.

_____

_____

8. How did you learn about the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP)?

_____

_____

9. Please indicate in numerical order the ***three*** most important factors motivating you to participate in the SVPDP with "1" being most important.

Interest in Violence Prevention____ Free Curricular Materials_____

Training Opportunities_____ Interest in Civic Education_____

District request_____ School Request_____

Stipend_____ Other (please explain):_____

10. Indicate the grade level(s) of the students to whom you teach the SVPDP.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

11. To what extent are parents involved in your classroom activities and lessons?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not involved very involved

12. In what ways are parents involved in your classroom?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

13. How clearly do you understand the goals of the SVPDP?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all clear very clearly

14. What, in your opinion, are the goals of the SVPDP?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

15. How clearly do you understand the roles of the other SVPDP participants?

Site Coordinator:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all clear very clearly

Evaluator:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all clear very clearly

CCE Staff:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all clear very clearly

Researchers from the LBJ School at the University of Texas:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all clear very clearly

16. Please fill in the following information regarding the class or classes in which you are currently using the SVPDP Materials.

Course Name	Number of Students	District Adopted Textbook (Name and Publisher)
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.

Appendix C. LBJ School SVPDP Questionnaire for Teachers, March 2000

Please fax the completed survey, or return it in the enclosed, postage-paid envelope, to

Dr. Kenneth Tolo, Professor and Project Director
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Drawer Y
Austin, Texas 78713-8925
Phone: 512/471-3270 FAX: 512/471-1835

Please return by March 1, 2000

School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP)
Questionnaire For Teachers

Name: _____

Email: _____School Name: _____

Date: _____

Please answer the following questions, providing us your perceptions of the School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program (SVPDP). Feel free to attach additional comments on a separate sheet of paper for any question or item that may require a more elaborate answer.

SVPDP Implementation

1. How free are you to adapt the CCE curricular materials to meet the needs of your students/district (e.g. add/eliminate lessons, change SVPDP suggested lesson order, etc.)?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   not free very free

2. How many hours per week, on average, do you teach the CCE curriculum?___

3. Estimate the percentage of the SVPDP curriculum you have completed.

   0% 20% 30% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Factors Affecting Implementation

4. To what extent is the community involved in your SVPDP activities and lessons?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   not involved very involved

5. Which community groups/representatives did you work with? (Please circle all that apply)

Kiwanis	American Legion	Veterans' Groups	Lions' Club
Jaycees	Girl/Boy Scouts	Police Dept.	Shriners
Local officials	Fire Dept.	Knights of Columbus	

Other _____

6. Indicate specific examples or types of community involvement in SVPDP activities and lessons.

_____

_____

_____

7. How many times have you had contact with the SVPDP site coordinator in your district (outside teacher training sessions)?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6+
not at all						6+ times

8. What form(s) of interaction do you have with your district SVPDP site coordinator? (Please circle all that apply)

Memos	Telephone	Email	Teacher Training
Appointments	Faculty Meetings	Other _____	

9. Assess the quality of your interaction with the SVPDP site coordinator in your district.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not helpful						very helpful

10. How many times have you had contact with the SVPDP site evaluator in your district (outside of teacher training sessions)?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6+
not at all						6+ times

11. What form(s) of interaction do you have with your district SVPDP site evaluator?
(Please circle all that apply)

Memos Telephone Email Teacher Training

Classroom Visits Faculty Meetings Other _____

12. Assess the quality of your interaction with the SVPDP site evaluator in your district.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not helpful very helpful

13. How many times per month, on average, do you have contact with other teachers using the SVPDP?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6+

not at all 6+ times/month

14. What form(s) of interaction do you have with other teachers using the SVPDP?
(Please circle all that apply)

Memos Telephone Email Teacher Training

Classroom Visits Faculty Meetings Other _____

15. Assess the quality of your interaction with other SVPDP teachers.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not helpful very helpful

Reflections

16. Rate the impact of the SVPDP on reducing your students' tendencies toward violence and on changing their attitudes toward violence.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

no impact high impact

17. Rate your students' attitudes toward the SVPDP curriculum.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not enthusiastic very enthusiastic

18. Rate the impact of the SVPDP on increasing your students' knowledge of and/or interest in civics.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

no impact high impact

19. To whom do you talk if you have problems with the SVPDP? (Please circle all that apply)

Site Evaluators Site Coordinators CCE Staff

Other Teachers School Administrators District Administrators

Other (please specify) _____

20. How willing would you be to participate in this program again?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not willing very willing

Please explain: _____

_____

21. In the future, would you use CCE materials outside of the SVPDP program?

Yes No

Please explain: _____

_____

Additional Comments

22. Please feel free to provide additional comments about your perceptions of the SVPDP.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix D. SVPDP Curriculum Outline Checklist

Curriculum Outline Checklist

Level I

The following topics and lessons from *We the People...*, *Foundations of Democracy* and *Project Citizen* need to be taught and integrated with other texts and materials provided by your school district during the 1999–2000 school year if the program is to be effective. We are asking you to turn in the checklist at the end of each semester. Please place the checklist in the front of your notebook and check off each topic as you have accomplished the instruction. We will give you a fresh checklist to complete at the end of each semester.

Demonstration Phase I

___ 1. What is authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 1)
___ 2. What is the difference between power and authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 1)
___ 3. Why do we need authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 3)
___ 4. Where is authority found and how is it justified? (*Foundations* – Lesson 2)
___ 5. How should we choose people for positions of authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 5)
___ 6. Who should be selected for positions of authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 5)
___ 7. What should be considered when evaluating rules? (*Foundations* – Lesson 7)
___ 8. Examining rules in your school's Student Code of Conduct
___ 9. What are rights? (*We the People*... Lesson 2)
___ 10. What are natural rights? (*WTP*... Lesson 2)
___ 11. Why do we need government? (*WTP*... Lesson 2)
___ 12. What is a republican government? (*WTP*... Lesson 3)
___ 13. What is the meaning of the common welfare? (*WTP*... Lesson 3)
___ 14. What is the meaning of civic virtue? (*WTP*... Lesson 3)
___ 15. Why do we have separation of powers and checks and balances? (*WTP*... Lesson 4)
___ 16. What is a constitution? (*WTP*... Lesson 4)
___ 17. What is a dictatorial government? (*WTP*... Lesson 4)
___ 18. What are the benefits and costs of authority (*Foundations*, *Authority*, Lessons 9, 10)
___ 19. What should be the scope and limits of authority? (*Foundations*, *Authority*, Lessons 11, 12)

Demonstration Phase II

___1. What experiences led to the American Revolution? (*WTP*... Lesson 5)
___2. Discuss bullying tape and issues relating to how to stop bullying.
___3. What basic ideas about government were in the Declaration of Independence? (*WTP*... Lesson 6)

___4. How did the states govern themselves after the Revolution? (*WTP*... Lesson 6)
___5. What were the Americans like in the 1780s? (*WTP*... Lesson 1)
___6. What were some of the problems of the Articles of Confederation? (*WTP*... Lesson 6)

Demonstration Phase III

___1. Who were the framers of the Constitution? (*WTP*... Lesson 7)
___2. What compromises were made during the writing of the Constitution? (*WTP*... Lesson 8)
___3. What basic ideas are represented in the Preamble? (*WTP*... Lesson 10)
___4. How did the framers organize our government? (*WTP*... Lessons 11, 12, 13 & 14)
___5. The federal system created by the Constitution (*WTP*... Lesson 15 and supplement)
___6. Current issues related to federalism (education, welfare, highways, gun control)
___7. Learning to listen to the political ideas of others.
___8. Tolerance toward others through listening skills.
___9. How did political parties develop? (*WTP*... Lesson 20)
___10. What is justice? (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 1)
___11. Examining issues of distributive justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 2, 3 & 4)
___12. Examining issues of corrective justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 5, 6, 7 & 8)
___13. Examining issues of procedural justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 9, 10 & 11)
___14. Who decides what the Constitution means? (*WTP*... Lesson 19)
___15. How does the Constitution protect our basic rights? (*WTP*... Lessons 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20)

Demonstration Phase IV

___1. What are the responsibilities of citizens? (*WTP*... Lesson 21)
___2. What is responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 1)
___3. What are the sources of responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 2)
___4. What are the consequences of fulfilling responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 4)
___5. How should one choose among competing responsibilities? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 6, 7 & 8)
___6. Students study and discuss the issue of social cliques and the degree to which they cause conflict.
___7. How can you promote the common welfare? (*WTP*... Lesson 22)
___8. What decisions will you make as a citizen?

Demonstration Phase V

Students participate in the culminating activity of *We the People*... as designed by the Center for Civic Education for elementary and middle school students.

Demonstration Phase VI

Students participate in the *Project Citizen* curriculum, identify a problem they wish to study in their community, follow the steps outlined in the curriculum, design a portfolio that illustrates their solutions, and make a presentation to a group of adults.

Curriculum Outline Checklist

Level II

The following topics and lessons from *We the People...*, *Foundations of Democracy* and *Project Citizen* need to be taught and integrated with other texts and materials provided by your school district during the 1999–2000 school year if the program is to be effective. We are asking you to turn in the checklist at the end of each semester. Please place the checklist in the front of your notebook and check off each topic as you have accomplished the instruction. We will give you a fresh checklist to complete at the end of each semester.

Demonstration Phase I

___ 1. What is authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 1)
___ 2. What is the difference between power and authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 1)
___ 3. Why do we need authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 1)
___ 4. Where is authority found and how is it justified? (*Foundations* – Lesson 3)
___ 5. How should we choose people for positions of authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 5)
___ 6. Who should be selected for positions of authority? (*Foundations* – Lesson 5)
___ 7. What should be considered when evaluating rules? (*Foundations* – Lesson 6)
___ 8. Examining rules in your school's Student Code of Conduct
___ 9. What are rights? (*We the People...* Lesson 1)
___ 10. What are natural rights? (*WTP...* Lesson 1)
___ 11. What is a social compact or a social contract? (*WTP...* Lesson 1)
___ 12. What is a republican government? (*WTP...* Lesson 2)
___ 13. What is the meaning of the common welfare? (*WTP...* Lesson 2)
___ 14. What is the meaning of civic virtue? (*WTP...* Lesson 2)
___ 15. Why do we have separation of powers and checks and balances? (*WTP...* Lesson 2)
___ 16. What is a constitution? (*WTP...* Lesson 3)
___ 17. What is a dictatorial government? (*WTP...* Lesson 3)
___ 18. What are the five characteristics of higher government? (*WTP...* Lesson 3)
___ 19. What should be the scope and limits of authority? (*Foundations*, Lesson 8)
___ 20. Evaluating the Benefits and Costs of a School Dress Code (*Foundations*, Lesson 9)
___ 21. What are the purposes of the three branches of government? (*WTP...* Lesson 4)
___ 22. How do the three branches check and balance each other? (*WTP...* Lesson 4)

Demonstration Phase II

___ 1. Class is divided in six groups, each of which will specialize in one unit of *We the People...*

___2. What is a feudal system and a monarchy? (*WTP*... Lesson 5)
___3. What is the importance of the Magna Carta? (*WTP*... Lesson 5)
___4. How does the British Parliament differ from our House of Representatives and Senate? (*WTP*... Lesson 5)
___5. What experiences led to the American Revolution? (*WTP*... Lesson 6)
___6. Discuss bullying tape and issues relating to how to stop bullying.
___7. What basic ideas about government were in the Declaration of Independence? (*WTP*... Lesson 7)
___8. How did the states govern themselves after the Revolution? (*WTP*... Lesson 8)
___9. What were the Americans like in the 1780s? (*WTP*... Lesson 9)
___10. What were some of the problems of the Articles of Confederation? (*WTP*... Lesson 10)
___11. The legislative, executive and judicial branches of government and the struggle over the Constitution (*WTP*... Lessons 14 & 15)

Demonstration Phase III

___1. The federal system created by the Constitution (*WTP*... Lessons 16, 17 & 18)
___2. Current issues related to federalism (education, welfare, highways, gun control)
___3. Learning to listen to the political ideas of others.
___4. Tolerance toward others through listening skills.
___5. How did political parties develop? (*WTP*... Lesson 20)
___6. What is justice? (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 1)
___7. Examining issues of distributive justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 3)
___8. Examining issues of corrective justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 6 & 8)
___9. Examining issues of procedural justice. (*Foundations*, *Justice*, Lesson 12 & 14)
___10. Who decides what the Constitution means? (*WTP*... Lessons 21 & 22)
___11. How does the Constitution protect our basic rights? (*WTP*... Lessons 23, 24, 25, 26 & 27)

Demonstration Phase IV

___1. What are the responsibilities of citizens?
___2. What is responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 1)
___3. What are the sources of responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 2)
___4. What are the consequences of fulfilling responsibility? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 4)
___5. How should one choose among competing responsibilities? (*Foundations*, *Responsibility*, Lesson 6, 7 & 9)
___6. Students study and discuss the issue of social cliques and the degree to which they cause conflict.
___7. How can citizens participate? (*WTP*... Lesson 28)
___8. What decisions will you make as a citizen? (*WTP*... Lesson 29)

Demonstration Phase V

Students participate in the culminating activity of *We the People...* as designed by the Center for Civic Education for elementary and middle school students.

Demonstration Phase VI

Students participate in the *Project Citizen* curriculum, identify a problem they wish to study in their community, follow the steps outlined in the curriculum, design a portfolio which illustrates their solutions, and make a presentation to a group of adults.

Appendix E. SVPDP Curriculum Integration Outline

School Violence Prevention Demonstration Program

Curriculum Integration Outline

Middle School

Unit I – What is Government?

Foundations of Democracy – Authority – Lesson 1,2 & 8

We the People… Lessons 1, 2 & 3

Unit II – How Can We Prevent the Abuse of Power?

We the People… Lessons 4, 5, 6, & 7

Foundations of Democracy – Authority – Lessons 10, 12 & 13

Violence in the Schools – Lesson 7

Your School's Student Code of Conduct

Unit III – Early American History After the Revolution

We the People… Lessons 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13

Lessons from other texts----

Unit IV – The Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches of Government and the Struggle Over the Constitution.

Foundations of Democracy – Authority – Lessons 4 & 5

Responsibility – Lessons 1, 2 & 9

We the People… Lessons 14, 15, 16, 17 & 19

Unit V – The Federal System Created By the Constitution

We the People… Lesson 18

Lessons from other texts-----

Unit VI – Deciding What the Constitution Means Today

We the People… Lessons 21 & 22

Foundations of Democracy – Authority – Lesson 12

Unit VII – Basic Rights of Americans

We the People... Lessons 23, 24 & 25

Foundations of Democracy – Privacy – Lessons 7, 8 & 12

Unit VIII – What is Justice and How Does it Relate to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?

Foundations of Democracy – Justice – Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11 & 14

We the People... Lesson 26

Unit IX – What are the Responsibilities of Being a Citizen?

We the People... Lessons 28 & 29

Foundations of Democracy – Responsibility –

Lessons 6 & 8 – ***Authority*** – Lessons 4 & 5

Unit X – Demonstrating Your Knowledge to a Group of Adults

We the People... Culminating Activity Materials

Unit XI – What Does Public Policy Mean?

Project Citizen, Step I

Violence in the Schools, Lesson I

Unit XII – Selecting a Problem for Class Study

Project Citizen – Step II

Violence in the Schools – Lessons 2, 3 & 4

Unit XIII – Gathering Information on a Problem

Project Citizen – Step III

Violence in the Schools – Lesson 5

Unit XIV – Developing a Class Portfolio

Project Citizen, Step 4

Violence in the Schools – Lesson 6

Unit XV – Presenting Your Class Portfolio

Project Citizen, Step 5

Unit XVI – Reflecting on Your Experience in ***We the People…*** and ***Project Citizen***

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